

# The Academy

## and Literature.

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## The Literary Week.

FEW books of outstanding interest have been published during the past week. The total is rather in excess of the previous week's, but many of the volumes are reprints or reference books. The only activity seems to be in the way of verse; we have received five volumes, amongst which is Sir Rennell Rodd's "Myrtle and Oak," which comes by way of Boston. We select the following books as being worthy of consideration:—

### THE VILLAGE PROBLEM. By G. F. Millin.

Mr. Millin has already given us some thoughtful books, among them "Evil and Evolution." But here he recurs to a question in which he is deeply versed. This is an amplification and development of an article of less than a dozen pages which appeared in "Present-day Papers," and the object is to show the causes of village decay and to suggest how the village may be recreated. Mr. Millin holds very strongly that the evil at the root of the matter is the present system of land tenure, and that the village can hope to be resuscitated only when the land has been acquired for public use.

### THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH. By George W. E. Russell.

A volume of reprinted papers, dealing with "the members of the household of faith." "That Household," says Mr. Russell, "like all large families, contains a rich variety of type and character. The twofold object of this book is to exhibit the unifying element supplied by personal devotion to Him whom all call Master, and to suggest some practical inferences from the laws which He has laid down for the government of His House." The volume is dedicated to Arthur Henry Stanton "with loyal and loving gratitude." Even when we find ourselves in disagreement with Mr. Russell we always respect his honesty and candour.

### AN OLD COUNTRY HOUSE. By Richard Le Gallienne.

On the first page we read: "Perdita and I, . . . almost as soon as we dreamed of keeping a house together at all, had agreed that, if possible, it must be an old house." The book is slight, graceful, and fragrant.

These adjectives have so often been applied to certain of Mr. Le Gallienne's books before that we wish he would give us the opportunity to use different epithets. But we are not ungrateful for the fancy and brightness of "An Old Country House."

### THE "VANITY FAIR" ALBUM.

This "show of Sovereigns, Statesmen, Judges, and Men of the Day" is always a welcome annual. The present is the thirty-fourth issue. As a record of contemporary personalities these caricatures are of real value, and their level of excellence is remarkably high. The Biographical and Critical notices are brief and to the point.

Dr. TEMPLE, who has passed away just after completing his eighty-first year, was a Primate who set a deep mark upon social life, though his contributions to literature were few and slight. He did much to enlist the forces of the Church on the side of temperance (for he remembered the days when high church was associated with high farming and old port). But the central activity of his life was in the years he spent as headmaster of Rugby, where he was an influence only less strong than Dr. Arnold, and was defined by one of the boys—in a phrase not likely to be forgotten—as "a beast, but a just beast." And the most characteristic of his few publications are the "Sermons" preached in Rugby School Chapel. His unfailing interest in educational questions was shown by the very last appearance he made in public. It was when the House of Lords were discussing the Education Bill. Dr. Temple was scarcely able to stand. But he rose with difficulty to speak, and spoke for more than half an hour. The last words he uttered before sinking back helpless into his seat were: "It is an honest and statesmanlike measure, and in spite of any objections that may be made, I hope it will pass." He passed away on Tuesday morning, having survived by a few hours the sixth anniversary of his elevation to the Primacy, which took place on December 22, 1896. Dr. Temple published a large number of tracts and pamphlets upon current topics of social and religious interest, and his Bampton lectures were issued in book form almost as a matter of course. But it is not as a writer, it is rather as a personal influence that Dr. Temple will be remembered.

WITH the end of the year one cannot avoid looking round to count the vacant literary chairs. And, as usual, if we balance those who have gone against those who have arrived, the loss seems greater than the gain. The first week of the year carried off a man who promised to exercise—perhaps he may even yet exercise—a commanding influence on international life by his pen. For Jean de Bloch, whose notable work on modern warfare is said to have converted the Tsar, was the real founder of the Court of Arbitration at the Hague.

BUT the biggest name in literature that the year has erased from the roll of the living is that of Zola. The furious controversies over his earlier works, his dramatic plunge into the Dreyfus case, the pitiful accident of his death all combined to impress his personality on his generation. France has also lost Xavier de Montépin, the popular fiction writer, and "Henri Gréville" (the pseudonym of Madame Durand), who was scarcely less popular, though eminently respectable. Aurélien Scholl, most prolific of journalists, is no longer to be met with on the Paris boulevards. M. de Maulde la Clavière will be known to many English readers through the work on the "Women of the Renaissance" which has been translated. Eugene Muntz, the critic and historian of art, is also one of the literary losses of France.

AMERICA has seen the passing, in Bret Harte, of one of her most famous veterans of literature. Another veteran who has fallen is Frank Stockton. Both these had laboured long and had done the best work of which they were capable. But two of America's youngest and most promising novelists died during 1902. Paul Leicester Ford, the author of "Janice Meredith," was shot dead by his brother; Frank Norris was carried off before he had got beyond early manhood, and before he could finish the triad of novels of which "The Octopus" was the brilliant first. One should not omit reference to the death of E. L. Godkin, the founder and editor of the New York "Nation," and the author of such luminous social works as "The Problems of Democracy."

Two poets of note have been lost to England during the year—three, indeed, if we count Lionel Johnson as a poet rather than a literary critic. Philip James Bailey had outlived the tremendous reputation he had gained with "Festus," while Aubrey de Vere never appealed to a wide audience. The chief losses to fiction are by the death of George Henty and Mrs. Alexander, and last, but certainly not least, by the premature passing of George Douglas Brown, the author of "The House with the Green Shutters." In Mr. Brown and Mr. Norris Great Britain and America had two young writers who were surely marked for greatness had they been spared. Of historians we have lost two masters of their craft, Samuel Rawson Gardiner and Lord Acton. Lord Acton was rather an influence than a writer. But he leaves behind him the splendid historical library which has passed through the hands of Mr. John Morley to Cambridge University.

THE death-roll of the year contains the names of many who were writers on occasion, but were notable in other ways. Sir Richard Temple, Sir Arthur Arnold, Canon Rawlinson, C. Kegan Paul, Samuel Butler (the author of "Erewhon"), Dr. Chase, and J. T. Nettlehip, the painter who wrote a well-known book on Browning, have all passed away since we last told the tale of our losses. But the most notable name among those who have turned to letters rather for pastime than for profit is that of

Lord Dufferin, whose fame as the author of "Letters from High Latitudes" has never been obscured either by his splendid reputation as a diplomatist, or the financial misfortunes that clouded his latest days.

FLEET STREET with its courts and alleys is gradually being denuded of its literary associations, though it may be clothing itself in others which our great grandchildren will cherish. But "Goldsmith's House" in Wine Office Court, to which many Americans make pilgrimage, remains. It is now propped upon crutches, lest it should miss the support of its disappearing neighbour. No. 6, Wine Office Court, seems to have received Goldsmith in the year 1760. He had been writing for John Newbery, and in these "superior lodgings" he dwelt with one of Newbery's relatives, whose duty was probably to stimulate Goldsmith's spasmodic energies. On May 31, 1761, as you may learn from the "Dictionary of National Biography," Johnson supped at Goldsmith's lodgings. And we learn that he came "dressed with scrupulous neatness." For he had learned that Goldsmith had quoted him as a "precedent for slovenly habits." Boswell's account of his first call on Dr. Johnson would point that precedent.

THE sale of Thackeray's drawings and autograph at Messrs. Sotheby's last Saturday (which in our last issue we inadvertently announced for next month) realised the respectable sum of £1,375 16s. 6d. These letters and drawings were the property of the late Miss Kate Perry and her sister Mrs. Elliot, both of whom were intimate friends of Thackeray. Miss Kate Perry's album was the principal lot in the sale. It contains among other interesting matters, an original poem by Thackeray, "The Pen and the Album," a drawing of a page boy shutting the door in the author's face, a drawing of Thackeray himself. Moreover, the album contains some letters from Lord Lytton and others. The bids rose from £155 to £590, at which price the album was secured by Mr. Sabin. Among the pencil drawings by Thackeray, which were sold separately, was a small full-length drawing of himself lecturing, and that fetched £78, while a pen and ink sketch of clothes "Hung on the Line," was knocked down at £13 10s. Not the least interesting of the lots was a curious copy of Lamb's "Beauty and the Beast," without the music. It contains eight engravings and a woodcut on the wrapper; it is enclosed in a paper case on which is printed the title page, and on the reverse side is the advertisement of the work and of "Prince Dorus." The book is said never before to have occurred for sale in this form, and it was bought for £52.

THACKERAY certainly never obtained such a price for a set of verses in his lifetime as was given for the three stanzas in autograph which were sent to Miss Perry with a small gold brooch enamelled in colours with the head of her Skye terrier. Here is the first of them:—

I am Miss Perry's faithful Phil  
And my picture thus I send her,  
Don't I look as if I'd kill  
Any Rogue that dared approach her.

We do not know if the remaining verses show an equally strict economy of rhyme. But together they realised £50.

THE old cry is continually recurring: Why does contemporary poetry fail to sell? A writer in the Chicago "Dial" discusses the question, and cannot find a satisfactory answer. We have ourselves often had something to say on the subject, with very much the same result. "If poetry is a fine art," says the "Dial's" contributor, "there

is no apparent reason why the poetic product should not 'exploit' itself upon even terms with any other fine-art product." But the fact remains that poetry, except it happens to be allied with more or less topical matter, is not a commercial success. No one, of course, would expect a volume of verse to sell as a popular novel sells, but it is a source of continual wonder to us that really good contemporary verse is so little read. Are the free libraries doing their duty in this matter? If they merely exist to supply books which are asked for they are hardly doing their duty. There must be a good many readers who would be thankful for wise leading.

Mr. T. W. H. CROSLAND is a courageous man. Having disposed of the "Unspeakable Scot" he is about to turn his attention to "Lovely Woman," which Mr. Grant Richards is to publish at the turn of the year. The man who does not fear to array against himself Scotland and the female sex must be girt with "robur et æs triplex."

"THAT is very piquant and entertaining idea," says a writer in the "Westminster Gazette," "which M. F. Loliée furnishes in the current number of the 'Revue Bleue,' that most excellent among Parisian weeklies. M. Loliée, in a moment of inspiration, wrote to some of the leading European journalists asking their opinion on the French press. Here, indeed, was an opening for all sorts of criticisms, and such, indeed, have been administered by more than one of the contributors to the interesting symposium. But, if journalism teaches anything to its devotees, it teaches that the pill of criticism is always most successfully administered in a spoonful of something very pleasant, and it is in this palatable form that 'Popinion Européenne sur la presse française' is given in the readable articles devoted to the subject. Here, for instance, is the opinion of Herr W. Singer, editor of the 'Neue Wiener Tageblatt' and President of the Central Office of the Press Association. He writes:—

The most characteristic feature of the French Press seems to me to be an invincible leaning towards seeing things across a personality, and to give to accounts of events a personal and rather fantastic, or, if you like, artistic stamp. . . . Thus, while our newspapers reflect the facts of the day, political and otherwise, the majority of French papers reflect the spirit of the day.

Which summary strikes us as an excellent piece of criticism. Mr. Stead, who was, very naturally, chosen as one of the English journalists sufficiently acquainted with the contents of French papers to be able to sit in judgment upon them, remarks, among other things:—

One or two French papers, notably the 'Temps,' seem to me to be better informed about things concerning English politics than any of our papers are concerning French politics. As to the general impression in England with regard to the great French dailies, it is held that they are superior to ours from the point of view of expression and literary style, but that they are inferior in finding and grouping news, as English papers are inferior to American ones on these points.

A Swiss, a Russian, and other journalists, including M. de Blowitz, the retiring veteran, are among the contributors to the series of articles."

A WRITER in the "Pilot" has been delivering himself concerning "The Abuse of Humour." He considers that "we have come to value humour far above its proper worth," and that we have exalted it to the level of the cardinal virtues. We think that the writer takes too serious a view of humour; our impression is that we give it no higher a place now than it was ever given. The

tendency to enjoy "misapplied parody," and to make fun of serious subjects is no more typical of our time than of most others; the spurious humourist has been always with us. Humour, like everything else, must be judged by a critical standard. Perhaps the "Pilot's" contributor, in condemning much modern humour, has forgotten to compare it with the comparatively forgotten humour of past generations. We agree with him that to-day a great deal of nonsense is written, and more spoken; but so it was yesterday and the day before. Even the minor Elizabethans sinned grievously.

Mr. KIPLING (in spite of the unfortunate instance of the "flannelled fools") generally manages to crystallise popular sentiment in his occasional verses, and undoubtedly "The Rowers," which appeared in the "Times" last Monday, expresses a very general sentiment against our joining of hands with the Germans in Venezuela when "the dead they mocked are scarcely cold." But our concern is not with the political side of the matter. Take the closing stanza:—

In sight of peace—from the narrow seas  
O'er half the world to run—  
With a cheated crew, to league anew  
With the Goth and the shameless Hun!

The Goth we may identify. But the Hun! The Huns were Mongolians and the bitterest foes of the Germanic races. Can it be that the omniscience of Mr. Kipling has here an unsuspected limit?

NEARLY a couple of dozen pantomimes are now being presented in London, and each one has one of a dozen or so of the old stories as the background: "Aladdin," "The Forty Thieves," "Mother Goose," "Cinderella," "Jack and the Beanstalk," "Dick Whittington," and so forth. You will notice the curious range, from the "Arabian Nights" to the City Corporation. And you will wonder what it is in these diverse stories from diverse ages and places which has given them this unique place. The last story written that has taken its place with the earlier legends in the imagination of childhood and age is that of Robinson Crusoe. It would be interesting to inquire how long it takes a story to reach this position, and whether we have any which are on their way to the pantomimes of A.D. 2002. The only such story that occurs to us at the moment is "Alice in Wonderland." It has, we know, already been dramatized. But the story has taken such a hold on a whole generation, that we should not be surprised to find Alice in no long time ranking with Cinderella and Little Red Riding Hood.

IN writing a play, "Flodden Field" for Mr. Tree, Mr. Alfred Austin is strictly following the precedent set by Poets Laureate. Tennyson had three plays produced at the Lyceum, and if Wordsworth is unknown as a dramatist, all the earlier holders of the office were playwrights, from Ben Jonson, Davenant, and their obscure successors to the great day of Dryden, and the less illustrious reigns of Shadwell, Nahum Tate and Colley Cibber. Really it was almost demanded of Mr. Austin that he should write a play.

THERE are fashions in plays as in other things (you will remember how the "Gaiety Girl" was the mother of the "Shop Girl" and many other girls). At present the fashion turns towards the mediæval mystery play. It was set doubtless by the revival of "Everyman." Last week we were watching—and reading—Mr. Laurence Housman's



Nativity play "Bethlehem." This week, as we learned from the last number of the "Saturday Review," a Nativity play by Mr. Arthur Symonds, entitled "Mary at Bethlehem," is to appear. It will be printed in this week's "Saturday Review."

A CORRESPONDENT of the "New York Times Saturday Review" has contributed to that journal some reminiscences of Thackeray's lectures on the English Humourists. The writer considers that Thackeray's judgment of Swift and Sterne was warped—a conclusion at which most impartial judges have arrived. A little further on we read: "although Mr. Thackeray treats Henry Fielding in a very charitable spirit, I am not sorry that his day is gone." But Fielding's day, over here at any rate, has not gone, nor is it likely to go so long as breadth and humour and human kindness count.

## Bibliographical.

THE publication of "Songs from the Novels of T. L. Peacock" sets one reflecting upon the renewal during recent years of that writer's vogue. The revival of interest in him began with the reproduction of his works under the auspices of Sir Henry Cole. Then, in 1891, came a very taking edition of those works under the editorship of Dr. Richard Garnett and the imprimatur of Messrs. Dent. This edition is in eight volumes, of which two are given to "Melincourt," two to "Gryll Grange," and one each to "Headlong Hall," "Nightmare Abbey," and "Maid Marian." The eighth volume, perhaps the most interesting of all in some respects, is a collection of miscellanea, including "Calidore: a Fragment," some essays and recollections, and some reminiscences of Peacock by Sir Edward Strachey. It includes, further, an index to the first lines of the fifty-eight lyrics scattered through the novels. This edition is illustrated only by pictorial frontispieces to the volumes. On the other hand, pictorial illustration is a leading feature of the five Peacock volumes which Messrs. Macmillan have included in their "Illustrated Standard Library," and for which Prof. Saintsbury wrote the introductions. "Headlong Hall" and "Nightmare Abbey" were published in one volume in 1887 by Messrs. Putnam. Now we have this collection of the "Songs."

I am sorry to see, however, that the collection is not complete. Mr. Brimley Johnson, the editor as well as the publisher of the little volume, has thought proper to make a "few omissions." That may be defensible; but what I cannot understand is the process by which Mr. Johnson came to include in the "satires and epigrams" section of his brochure the two familiar quatrains beginning, respectively:—

Not drunk is he who from the floor  
Can rise alone, and still drink more.

and—

What makes all doctrines plain and clear?  
About two hundred pounds a year.

The source of the latter quotation, at any rate, is surely familiar to him.

Though I have not yet had time to peruse "Nova Solyma," the prose fiction so sensationally ascribed to Milton, I have contrived to run through the translator-editor's bibliographical appendix. This is in three parts, none of which has to do with "Nova Solyma" itself, the literary history of that work being given in the introduction. The first part of the appendix deals with the bibliography of

romance from the Renaissance to the end of the seventeenth century. Herein the editor attempts no "bibliographical niceties," giving only a classified list of titles and approximate dates. The other two parts are more elaborate. In one, we have a bibliography of romances "of a somewhat similar kind to 'Nova Solyma,' written in the same or the preceding century"—the first section treating of Utopian romances, the other of "Neo-Latin Romance of Elegance and Satire." The third part has for subjects "the only two companions" of "Nova Solyma" in England in the period between 1600 and 1650—the "Mundus Alter et Idem" and Bishop Godwin's "Man in the Moon." All this does but add to the bulk of volumes otherwise bulky enough, but it has interest of a kind, and certainly will help the student to realize the position held by "Nova Solyma" in the romantic literature of its era.

Dr. William Knight's resignation of his professorship has been followed by his issue of a book of recollections of eminent Scotsmen, and there is no reason to believe that, so long as his energies endure, there will be any cessation in his literary production. A complete account of his publications up to date would occupy more space than I am now able to give. A glance, however, at what he has put forth during the past ten or eleven years alone will suffice to mark both his industry and his versatility. His "Through the Wordsworth Country" (1890-2) was the latest of his many and notable labours in the Wordsworthian field. Then came his "Philosophy of the Beautiful: Outlines of Æsthetics" (1891-92), his "Aspects of Theism" (1893), his "Christian Ethic" (1894), his Memoir of Professor John Nichol (1896), and his "Lord Monboddo and Some of his Contemporaries" (1900). Last year we had three books from him—his "Varia: Studies of Problems of Philosophy and Ethics," his "Inter Amicos" (correspondence between himself and Dr. James Martineau), and his "Pro Patria et Regina" (an anthology of patriotic and loyal verse). It is probably by his Wordsworth books, his "Nichol," and his "Monboddo" that he will be best remembered.

It seems not to be generally known that the new play at the Shaftesbury Theatre, "A Little Un-Fairy Princess," is an adaptation by Mrs. F. H. Burnett of her story called "Sara Crewe, or What Happened at Miss Minchin's," which was published by Messrs. Warne in 1888.

Talking of the theatre, if it be true that Mr. Cyril Maude, the actor-manager, has written a history of the playhouse which he helps to govern, it is certain that he has fulfilled one of the numerous "felt wants." It is a curious fact that few of the London theatres have had historians. The late Mr. Edward Stirling penned a couple of thin volumes on "Old Drury Lane," but it was a perfunctory performance—a mingling of personal reminiscence and poor compilation. Mr. John Hollingshead, also, is the author of "Gaiety Chronicles," but the Gaiety has had a comparatively brief career. Really good books on Drury Lane and Covent Garden theatres would be welcome. So would a history of Her Majesty's. So would a history of the Lyceum and its predecessor on the same site, the "English Opera House." Mr. Maude, it is to be hoped, will go back to the beginning of the Haymarket, and sketch the lives of both the playhouses which have existed on the east side of that thoroughfare, and in comparison with which Her Majesty's was a mushroom. Mr. Baker's "History of the London Stage" is not without utility, but it only skims the surface of the subject.

THE BOOKMAN.



## Reviews.

## "A Somewhat Curious Book."

MUTUAL AID: A FACTOR OF EVOLUTION. By P. Krapotkin. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d.)

THIS is a somewhat curious book, the real object of which might conceivably evade the reader almost to the final chapter, were he unacquainted with the personality of Prince Krapotkin. But with that knowledge, he may not have to await the final chapter before he discovers that the book is really an elaborate attempt to base socialism on the laws of nature and evolution. Prince Krapotkin recognises in nature the two great principles of individualism (or self-assertion) and mutual aid, by which it becomes ultimately clear that he understands the socialistic principle. But (so far as we can discover his drift, which seems not altogether explicit) instead of regarding these two principles as equally essential, and reciprocally helpful in a proper coördination, he regards them as antagonistic and doomed one to overthrow the other. The victory, it should seem, he considers must be with the socialistic principle, or "mutual aid"; which is what might have been expected from his antecedents and well-known political principles. The whole book aims to exhibit progress as identified with the advancement, and declension with the temporary retrogression, of socialistic principles, or "mutual aid." It is a political propaganda in the guise of a semi-scientific treatise. He shows that the majority of animals live in societies, and that those who have most developed the practice of mutual aid are "the most numerous, the most prosperous, and the most open to further progress." He then surveys the development of human society: from the lowest savage stage, where already are found a wide series of social institutions, is developed the barbarian village community, and therewith "a new, still wider circle of social customs, habits, and institutions, under the principles of common possession of a given territory and common defence of it, under the jurisdiction of the village folk-mote, and in the federation of villages belonging to one stem." New needs produced the city, which "represented a double network of village communities connected with guilds." Finally, when the growth of "the State on the pattern of Imperial Rome" broke up the mediæval social life, "the mutual-aid tendency finally broke down the iron rules" of the State. Mutual aid "reappeared and asserted itself in an infinity of associations which now tend to embrace all aspects of life and to take possession of all that is required by man for life and for reproducing the waste occasioned by life." It is contended that Christianity, Buddhism, and all marked ameliorating religions or movements among mankind have owed their beneficence, at bottom, to the reassertion of this one principle. But at each reappearance it has been widened, till men are being taught to perceive that their true principle of action is not merely love, which is basically selfish, but the recognition of their oneness with every other man. The principle of socialism is thus that of all evolution, and in its ultimate conquest of individualism lies the regeneration of the world.

This is obviously too wide a theme for discussion in a review. But the book is interesting, able, and full of knowledge. Like all doctrinaire systems it is too watertight for anything, but that it contains much truth is undeniable, and to those who least accept the writer's conclusions it is of value as a storehouse of information on the subject of co-operation and combination for the common purpose of existence and protection among both men and animals. Very interesting, for example, are the communal customs of the Kabyles—the people who are, or were lately, making much trouble for the Sultan of Morocco. The *djemmâa* or folk-mote of the village community presides over all matters. The poor man can convoke an

"aid," as it is called; and then the rich man lends his labour to cultivate the poor man's field, the poor man repaying in like fashion when he is called upon. The *djemmâa* sets aside certain gardens and fields for the use of the poor. From the public funds which in various ways pass under control of the *djemmâa*, meat is bought and regularly distributed among the poor. When (on any but a market-day) a family happens to kill a sheep or a bullock for itself, announcement is made by the village crier, that sick persons and pregnant women may take of it what they need. Kabyle is bound to aid Kabyle whom he may meet in a foreign country, at risk of life and fortune, if the man be in need; otherwise the *djemmâa* of the man who fails to render aid must make good the loss to the sufferer. Every stranger in a Kabyle village has a right to winter housing, and his horses can graze on the common land for twenty-four hours. During the famine of 1867-68 all who took refuge in the Kabyle villages were fed, no matter what their nationality. In one district alone, twelve thousand from all parts of Algeria and even Morocco were so fed. This is charity which puts Christian and civilised peoples to the blush. So, also, do many features of Eskimo morality.

But the most attractive part of Prince Krapotkin's book to the general reader will probably be the section describing mutual aid among animals. The development of the social instinct among many of these is remarkable. Only the cat tribe are rooted individualists. Yet even lions sometimes hunt in company: quite recently the makers of the Uganda railway learned this to their cost, when two lions entered into partnership and brought the whole of the works to a standstill, killing some twenty Hindoos, besides uncounted numbers of African workmen, before they were finally shot down by the superintendent of the construction. The wolves, jackals, and dogs are well-known co-operative hunters. The wild dogs of Asia pull down even bears and tigers. The polar foxes drove Behring's crew to despair, ferreting out food from every hiding place. It was set on the top of a pillar; but one fox climbed up and threw it down piecemeal to his companions. Even the black bear of Kamschatka hunts in packs. The rodents are great society folk. The squirrel, individualist with us, in the Far West emigrates in hordes, stripping the country as he goes. The Russian marmot, or *souslik*, is a charming fellow at play. "No observer could refrain . . . from mentioning the melodious concerts arising from the sharp whistlings of the males and the melancholic whistlings of the females," says Prince Krapotkin. The American prairie dog is another joyously social creature, says the author:—

As far as the eye can embrace the prairie, it sees heaps of earth, and on each of them a prairie dog stands, engaged in a lively conversation with his neighbours by means of short barkings. As soon as the approach of man is signalled, all plunge in a moment into their dwellings . . . But if the danger is over . . . whole families come out of their galleries and indulge in play. The young ones scratch one another; they worry one another, and display their gracefulness while standing upright, and, in the meantime, the old ones keep watch. They go visiting one another, and the beaten footpaths which connect all their heaps testify to the frequency of the visitations.

Horses, donkeys, zebras, and the like, are, of course, socialists in a state of nature. They go in studs, each composed of several mares led by one male. These studs combine against enemies, and will repulse even the lion. In the Russian steppes there are battles between packs of wolves and herds of horses. Nay, the horses will even take the offensive against the wolves; and if the latter do not get speedily away, the wolf will be surrounded and crushed to death by infuriated hoofs. In a snowstorm, the stud keeps together and makes for a sheltered ravine. Hares and rabbits again are gamesome beasties—a hare has been known to take a fox for a nearing playmate, and

fall a victim to his passion for play. The rabbits, it seems, are patriarchal in their customs: the young bloods are kept in strict obedience, not only to the father, but to the grandfather. Your hare, however, will not associate with your rabbit; nor will one kind of quagga with another kind, though there is no competition for food to explain it. We suggest that it is the same instinct as that which makes Mrs. Brown, the large tradesman's wife, sniff at Mrs. Smith, the small tradesman's wife. Those rabbits our relations, indeed! What next, we wonder? But Prince Krapotkin does not mention the most marvellous example of animal society, namely, the wild dogs of Asiatic cities. Those of Constantinople are divided into districts, each under its own government. The boundary-line is invisible to human eyes, but sharp and fast. If a dog of another district stray a pace over it, the sentinels give the alarm, and he is set upon by a mob of dogs from the invaded territory. He does not attempt resistance, but holds up his paws in token of surrender—it is, in fact, a case of "paws up!" The districts are admirably policed, and a book might almost be written on the sagacity of this canine government. But what Prince Krapotkin tells is much more than he omits; and for this division alone of his book it would be worth reading.

### The Presbyterian in Power.

POLITICS AND RELIGION. By William Law Mathieson. 2 vols. (Maclehose and Sons.)

To most Englishmen, Scottish history from the days of John Knox to those of Lauderdale is, in any but its broadest outlines, a sealed book. Overshadowed as it is by the greatness of the events which happened in the southern kingdom under Elizabeth, the Stuarts, and the Commonwealth, it has never been adorned for us with the literary graces which make real for us the times of Mrs. Hutchinson, of Pepys, and of Burnet. Moreover, the constant grubbing amongst Presbyterian sermons and tracts that a closer study of it necessitates, proved wearisome even to such an indefatigable student as the late Prof. Gardiner. Hence, it is not astonishing that to most of us our mental picture of the time is drawn from the scenes of "The Legend of Montrose" and "Old Mortality."

This reproach, Mr. Mathieson—whose name is unfamiliar to us—has done his best to take away. Although he disclaims in his preface the attempt to write "a complete or detailed history," the two volumes before us are just what is wanted to give anyone already furnished with the outlines suggested, sufficient details to make as complete a picture as he can reasonably wish. Mr. Mathieson gives them also with an impartiality that leaves nothing to be desired, and in one or two passages goes so far as to hint that he is in sympathy with neither of the two political parties chiefly implicated. Add to this a clear style and abundant references to authorities, and it will be seen that he has omitted nothing likely to attract the reader anxious for information.

The first thing that strikes one in the facts here presented is the extreme sordidness of the motives which led to the Scottish Reformation. Mr. Mathieson does not put too fine a point on it when he says that the mainspring of the whole affair was the greed of the Scottish nobles. That the Catholic Church had become so ingrained with abuses as to have lost all hold upon the people is true enough, and it may even be said with Mr. Mathieson that the German Reformation, considered as a whole, was much more a moral than a religious movement. But even from this point of view, the Catholic Church in Scotland still discharged some useful duties to the nation, and the Reformation even of the monastic system, which had ended in something like half the national wealth being in the hands

of the orders, might in disinterested hands have been accomplished without the wholesale substitution of personal gain for public good which actually ended from it. That this was not so was due, according to Mr. Mathieson, especially to the personal character of the leading Scotchmen of the time, whom he rallies pretty impartially as greedy, self-seeking, or at the best stupid. John Knox himself was but a perfect exemplar of all that is best and worst in the Scottish character. With an absolute loyalty to what he considered the Divine cause, he joined a contempt for compromise which made him impossible as a practical statesman, and a pedantry which could have had no other root than sheer lack of the gentler virtues. The Church founded by him was, says Mr. Mathieson, "founded on principles which forbade all hope of its stability. . . . Aiming at the establishment of a theocracy, he endowed his church with so hard and absolute, so intense and uncompromising a character that its claims were rejected by the State in his own day. . . . the Knoxian Church was essentially the church of a minority . . . and the man whose ideal was a theocracy, a *Civitas Dei*, has become a parent of schism, the father of Scottish dissent."

What the fruit that grew from this tree was, was to be seen in the next generation. The modified episcopacy established by James was, in Mr. Mathieson's opinion, the only reasonable and tolerant form of ecclesiasticism that Scotland has been allowed until our own times, and during the forty years or so that it lasted, the worst results of Knox's teaching were only feebly apparent. When, however, this was swallowed up by the ill-advised efforts of Charles to introduce Laudian Christianity, the underlying fanaticism of the Protestants broke out. The hysterical religion which followed the spread of Knoxian doctrines among the ignorant peasantry which had hitherto held aloof from them, not only led to a great depravation of morals, but were also, according to Mr. Mathieson, the direct cause of the witch mania which must prove the lasting disgrace of the Scottish clergy. From the beginning of the Rebellion to the Restoration, the voice of the Scottish ministers was seldom heard save in a cry for blood, and most of the atrocities, in the shape of the murder, under judicial forms or otherwise, of political opponents, are to be attributed to clerical instigation. How numerous these were, we must leave it to the readers of Mr. Mathieson to discover in his pages, but it will be news to some of us that after Philiphaugh, not only the Irish infantry, but all the women and children in the Royal camp, were massacred "with such savage and inhuman cruelty," says an eye-witness, "as neither Turk nor Scythian was ever heard to have done the like." Such of the combatants as had surrendered, some of them under promise of quarter, were murdered "at the instance of the clergy," either upon the way to Edinburgh or upon reaching that city. Meanwhile the morals of the people had so deteriorated, that at Cromwell's coming both crime and lesser immoralities were said to have never been so rife; and it is hard to discover among their misdeeds the one righteous deed of the Scottish clergy of the time—the establishment of an excellent system of elementary education.

Beyond the Restoration we do not propose to follow Mr. Mathieson. We are by no means sure that the risings put down at Pentland and Bothwell Bridge were as entirely unprovoked as Mr. Mathieson seems to imagine, and, at all events, the fact that so many peasants were found to suffer persecution for what we must needs consider conscience sake, speaks volumes for the sincerity of their religious convictions. Whether Carstares, who was mainly responsible for the increased toleration practised after the Revolution of 1688, was really the first Presbyterian statesman who, without ceasing to be one, discovered that "if the Church was to obtain just recognition, she must be content to give as well as to take, to co-operate as well as to command in the intricate drama of national life," may



well be doubted, but it is at any rate true that he was the first who had the power to give effect to his principles. Yet we believe that this was due not so much, as Mr. Mathieson seems to think, to the political stupidity of those who had hitherto ruled the destinies of Scotland, as to the fact that the fanaticism excited by Knox had in fact worn itself out. The same phenomena may be seen under similar circumstances in many other religions than the Christian.

The only other point on which we are inclined to differ from Mr. Mathieson is as to the dying out of the witch mania. We believe that this was due to no general decrease of superstition among the ruled, but to the gradual enlightenment of their rulers. As the author of *Waverley* shows, the Kirk Sessions even in the '45 were as ready to persecute supposed witches to the death as ever they had been in the palmy days of the witch-finders. But the rise of physical science which was associated with the Hobbism of Charles and the more open scepticism of Voltaire had in the meantime borne fruit, and persons of what would be now termed "culture" were ashamed to give way to such follies. On these points only do we think that Mr. Mathieson's interesting and informing book needs correction.

### Art History.

EARLY TUSCAN ART. By Sir W. M. Conway. (Hurst and Blackett.)

A WORK of art, like every other form of human achievement, is the result of the interaction of two factors. There is the individuality, incalculable in its origin, of the artist himself; and there is the environment of a school, and behind that school the social and economic conditions, by which the expression of that individuality is to a greater or less degree limited or determined. Recent critics of Italian art, with Mr. Bernhard Berenson at their head, have on the whole made it their main object to disengage and compare artistic individualities. In the handsomely printed and illustrated lectures before us, Sir W. M. Conway, who is Slade Professor of Fine Art at Cambridge, although he by no means neglects this side of the question, makes it rather his business to recall our attention to the other. In particular he lays stress on the importance of the ownership of what he calls the art-fund in determining the character of the art production at any given period in any given locality. For, after all, the artist must live: and in the long run the paymaster, much as one may regret it, will have his say in deciding the sort of thing that is to be produced. Sir W. M. Conway's sketch of the history of art from the twelfth to the fifteenth century may be thus summarized. The earliest patrons of art, when it began to lift its head above the water of the dark ages, are to be found in the "baronial class of nobles, bishops, abbots, and knights, who controlled small communities and directed the expenditure of the surplus products of industry." Under such influences arose small schools of aristocratic painters, somewhat remote from popular sympathies, who refreshed the old Italian tradition by new inspiration from Byzantium and from Islam. This type culminated in Niccolò Pisano at Pisa, in Cimabue at Florence, and in Duccio at Siena. At Siena, isolated, poor, anti-democratic, it was continued during the fourteenth century in Simone Memmi. But at Florence, and at all other cities of the plains where the art-fund passed into the hands of the trading classes, and of those characteristic teachers of the big populates, the Franciscans, an entirely new artistic ideal came to prevail.

The day for Byzantine symbolism was done. Francis and his followers had supplanted symbolism by fact. What their congregations were interested in were the New Testament story and the lives of the saints. They wanted to see pictures of the life of Christ, the doings, adventures, and martyrdoms of the saints. They wanted pictures, pictures they could understand, and plenty of them. Thus a great demand for anecdotal fresco-painting arose.

Franciscan art in its turn culminated in Giovanni Pisano and in the genius of Giotto, and in the hands of the Giottesque painters, being, as we understand Sir W. M. Conway, founded on the sand of an essentially inartistic popular taste, it rapidly degenerated. More nearly akin to the Siennese tradition was yet another school, of which the paymasters and inspirers were the great rivals of the Franciscan order, the Dominicans. Dominican art, as one sees it in the chapter-house of Sta. Maria Novella or in the Campo Santo of Pisa, is essentially allegorical, illustrative of the great system of theological thought elaborated by the greatest of all Dominicans, St. Thomas Aquinas.

A study of the greatest single name amongst Dominican painters, Fra Angelico, brings to a close an interesting, although in many respects debateable volume.

### A Credible Petrarch.

LOVE'S CRUCIFIX: NINE SONNETS AND A CANZONE: FROM PETRARCH. By Agnes Tobin. With a Preface by Alice Meynell. Illustrated by Graham Robertson. (Heinemann.)

THIS is a daintily got up book, gracefully illustrated; and a preface by so seldom speaking a writer as Mrs. Meynell naturally attracts the reader's attention. It differs from most "forewords" to books in that it says no syllable, good or bad, in praise, or the most modest commendation, regarding the book itself. If, in fine, Mrs. Meynell has an opinion regarding these translations, she has not uttered it, which, even from such an apostle of reticence as Mrs. Meynell, is a singular abnegation. She confines herself to comment on the quality of Petrarch as a poet, and the difficulties of translating him. It is hard, as she says, to render the ten-syllable line of the many syllabled Tuscan in monosyllabic English: the matter must needs be said at greater length, with consequent languor. Yet, she adds, the thing is possible—with good faith. His good faith saves Petrarch from the sentimentality which Lowell charged on him. So entire and distinguished a nature could not be sentimental: sentimentality is the note of vulgar natures. Petrarch's integrity (she says very well) is much that of Italian melody: in neither is there a very great nature, but in both a whole and clear nature.

These remarks go to the root of the matter. In translations from Petrarch the reader has been driven to wonder at the poet's great name: as in the worst of "Dantean renderings one never wonders. And the precise impression left on the reader of these translations has been that of sentimentality. The reason of it one now understands. Only a simple and single sincerity like the poet's own could evade the result—a sincerity combined with great technical efficiency. In these present days technical efficiency has not been far to seek: but plain good faith is the last quality to be found in our sophisticated and self-conscious time. Mr. J. A. Symonds gave us some versions of the sonnets which displayed all the elegance of artistic accomplishment, and sometimes conveyed a stronger impression of Petrarch's power than we had yet received. But one felt all the time that the translator was translating; that he was anxious about his diction, his numbers, and careful about many things; that he was following chosen models of diction, and that (in fine) there was something wanting.

Miss Tobin's little handful of versions (we could wish them more) are to us the first translations we have seen which make Petrarch's great name credible. They have sweetness, they have refinement of expression; they have admirable technique; the metre has melodious movement; yet this choiceness of diction, these qualities of technique are the last things to strike us—we are never provoked to stop and admire them. They do not force themselves on us, because (we imagine) the author was not busied about them: she was happily able to take them for granted, and leave us to take them for granted. Thus



we are left face to face with a pure and unobstructed beauty of tender feeling and high *ethos* (we have no precise equivalent for the Greek word). We had almost written "austere," did not those antitheses check the word. Yet in this version we do not notice them; they seem things of course. That is as it should be; and all his unobstructed beauty is as it should be. The art is an unconscious art—or seems to be, and we ask no more, since poetry is a matter of effect, not of means nor intention. Choice is difficult among these most purely simple renderings: almost at a venture, we take the following sonnet:—

On food in which my Lord doth so abound,  
Mourning and tears, I nourish my tired heart;  
And often I grow faint and often start,  
Musing how that this wound is most profound.  
She comes, whose like the age has never found;  
Soft splendours from her star-bound tresses dart;  
She sits, as though we never more must part,  
Gently upon the bed to which I'm bound:  
Laying the hands which I so much desired  
Upon my eyes, and speaking words, a tide  
Of sweetness, things no human lips have said.  
"What use," she says, "in knowing, if you grow  
tired?  
Do not say any more. Have you not cried  
Enough for me? You see I am not dead."

The still pathos of those last three lines is exquisite, most simple in means. Nor is the one *canzone* less admirably done than the sonnets.

### An Australian Poet.

THE POETICAL WORKS OF BRUNTON STEPHENS. (Angus and Robertson, Melbourne.)

THIS is a very mixed volume, in more than one sense. Mr. Brunton Stephens has touched with impartial hand serious and comic verse, the lyre and whatever may be the Australian equivalent of the banjo. Or rather, the comic verse appears to predominate. At the same time, both serious and comic verse, but especially the serious, is of unequal quality. Unlike such an Australian poet as Mr. Henry Lawson, it is only in the humorous pieces that we get the suggestion of the soil. The serious portion might (save for an occasional poem devoted to patriotic Australian sentiment) be the work of any English poet. There is not, of course, nor can be, such a thing as an Australian style, any more than an Irish or Anglo-Indian style; since the Australians inherit our language and literary traditions. But whereas Mr. Lawson's serious verse is full of Australian local colour, there appears little of it in Mr. Stephens. The bulk of the poems might have been written in London. To balance this, Mr. Stephens has style, which Mr. Lawson has not. We do not say that the style is specially distinguished, still less very individual: in England Mr. Stephens would be one among a number of poets with much the same manner, founded on a scholarly study of dignified models. From a certain poem (and one of the best) in the book, we should be disposed to risk a guess that he had, among other exemplars, studied Coventry Patmore—the later and greater Patmore of the "Unknown Eros." In that we may be wrong; and it matters little, for his style as a whole recalls not that poet, but the younger generation in general. In Australia the possession of a style not improbably gives him a certain *cachet*, since it seems largely lacking in the most of the Australian poets who have come under our notice. He has, moreover, the further claim to Colonial honours, in that he possesses a certain real poetic quality, beyond the ability to write spirited ballad or song. Again, this poetic gift would not, in England, rank him above many lesser poets with a true, but not strong portion of the poet's fire. But it is enough to deserve a

reasonable praise, even here. "The Angel of the Doves" has an idea, well, if somewhat diffusely worked out; though it is an excessive one.

A robin red-breast in a cage  
Puts all heaven in a rage,

wrote Blake: but Mr. Stephens not only assigns to the doves a special angel—which is an admissible and poetic idea; he brings her weeping before the Throne to proclaim that "Christ is needed on earth again," because dove-shooting exists.

And lo, in the midst of the throne of love  
There stood a Lamb as it had been slain,  
And over the throne there brooded a Dove.

A conclusion which almost wins pardon for the violent idea. Better, and really good, is "The Dark Companion," a fine application of the discovery of Uranus, whose

Strong persuasions spanned the void between

itself and its "perturbed moons." But with noticeable poems like this are mingled the weakest magazine-verse.

### Other New Books.

HENRY CARY SHUTTLEWORTH: A MEMOIR. Edited by George W. E. Russell. (Chapman and Hall.)

THIS sympathetic memoir of a popular London parson gives a happy indication of what the Anglican Church is capable of doing. It is something as distinct from the purely spiritual aim of the Roman Catholic Church, on the one hand, as, on the other, from the respectable negations of Congregationalism. It has its roots in the past; and is debarred from dangerous freedom of flight by a ballast of tradition that, of as little intrinsic value (some would say) as the tail of a kite, does serve to regulate its career and keeps its head towards the sky.

Shuttleworth was a man who, in any other air than that sober air of the Establishment in which he was born and reared, would have become ignobly popular. But the magic of Oxford, and the music of the Book of Common Prayer, and the majesty of Hooker, and the mediaeval fragrance of the churches and cathedra's in which he was ordained to minister had entered into his soul. His love for all men and women, his enjoyment of mirth and make-believe (he could pull wonderful mugs), his accomplishment in music, his rejoicing in the stage, his appreciation of what was good in literature: these dangerous qualities of the popular man were shaped and tempered by the discipline of the Oxford schools and the discriminating superciliousness of a University. In his work among the young men and women of middle-class London it was this that made him a more effectual antidote to the maggot of decivilisation than you might find among the class with which one is naturally inclined to compare him. Many a dissenting minister has known better than he how to make his conventicle a gathering place where clerks and shopgirls may seek and find the partner to share the happy little home; any quiet old Roman Catholic priest will solve you a case of conscience with more ready dispatch or will allay a scruple with easier tact; but neither offers to the sophisticated vulgar just such a lift as can Shuttleworth's kind of parson, whose hall-mark makes it easy for him to lower himself, yet remain undebased. His was a short career, and, so far as ecclesiastical dignity goes, undistinguished. Curate of St. Barnabas', Oxford, minor canon of St. Paul's Cathedral, vicar of St. Nicholas Cole Abbey, and professor of pastoral theology at King's College, London—these are all the things he was; but to the service of these offices he brought a personality that lighted and enlivened their routine.

ROME AND REFORM. By T. L. Kington Oliphant. Two vols. (Macmillan. 21s. net.)

THIS is a curious book, and, but that Mr. Oliphant tells us that he can remember the whole of the pontificate of Pius IX., should have been the work of a young unformed man. The author covers an immense deal of ground, but he never seems to arrive. His very paragraphs have about as much organic coherence as a bundle of hay; you almost feel that if their sentences sometimes were read in reverse order their general bearing would be as definitely perceptible. And as to the conclusion of the whole matter in search of which he ransacks the ages, spoils the climes, one can only say that it is not there.

For this conclusion, whatever it may be, Mr. Oliphant hopes to win the suffrages of moderate Roman Catholics. Some Anglican parson (let us say Sidney Smith) was told of a certain man: "He is a moderate Calvinist." "Moderate Calvinist," he exclaimed; "moderate tiger!" So, for our own part, we know Roman Catholics of many kinds—pious Roman Catholics, lax Roman Catholics, aggressive, lukewarm, doubting, halting, fanciful, mystical, stolid Roman Catholics—but a moderate Roman Catholic we do not know. Because the designation excludes the idea of moderation, which is compromise. One dogma of that religion is no more able to exist apart from the rest than the octave or the sestet of a sonnet. It ceases to be intelligible.

Mr. Oliphant's method is to take the countries of Europe one by one, and tell you all he knows of their history from the sixteenth century onwards. That all is a good deal, but (saving our respect from the author's diligence) he seems to us absolutely to lack the faculty for analysis and coördination. One is led down blind alley after blind alley to be brought stumbling back.

We gather that he supposes himself to have shown that, on the whole, Catholicism tends to debase a people, Protestantism to raise. But he has no real grasp of the fact that to such a conclusion one is not convincingly guided by a bare historical retrospect. What we really need in order to a just judgment is wise discrimination between the forces that at different crises have produced such and such lamentable or laudable results. That was what Newman, for instance, in combating this commonplace of controversy, so brilliantly attempted. And such discrimination is what in Mr. Oliphant's laborious pages we do not find.

THE STORY OF VERONA. By Alethea Wiel. (Dent.)

IN choosing a mediæval Italian town for historical treatment, the author is embarrassed by the width of her choice and not by any lack of subjects. Quite one of the most worthy is the ancient city made familiar to Englishmen by Shakespeare's tale of the immortal lovers Romeo and Juliet. Like the majority of the great cities of Italy, no date can be assigned to its foundation. No one can say when it rose from being merely a hamlet in a bend of the Adige, to a fortified city, for when it first comes into history it had been a town of importance maybe for centuries. Its history may be divided into three periods: its early years, which are hidden from us, before its absorption by Rome, an event which probably happened about the third century B.C.; its career as part of the Roman Empire which for convenience sake may be said to end with the deposition of Augustulus in 476 A.D.; and lastly, its mediæval existence when under dukes and counts it slowly worked its way to an independent position, until in 1405 it passed under the dominion of Venice, to fall with the republic nearly four hundred years later, when Napoleon invaded Italy. Verona has one claim to our attention which many of its rivals do not possess: it encouraged literature as well as painting and architecture. Catullus and Cornelius Nepos both belonged to the town

and district of Verona. Pliny the Elder and many of the writers of the Empire were natives, and to come to the Middle Ages, Dante, though not born in Verona, there found a haven in the day of his adversity and exile; and it has been said that his idea of the "bolgie" of the "Inferno" came to him from the shape of the arena at Verona, and that standing on the summit of that vast building he conceived the notion of creating his Hell on the same lines as those presented before his eyes.

THE STORY OF THE EMPIRE. By Edward Salmon. (Newnes.)

THE admirable series of small manuals known as the "Library of Useful Stories" has received a worthy addition in "The Story of the Empire." The author, by a clever piece of précis writing, has managed to compress the main facts of his subject within some hundred and sixty pages, and yet has succeeded in avoiding too staccato a style. It is literary pemmican, of course, but it is well enough done to make it an admirable handbook for the busy man who wishes to illuminate his ignorance on the subject which should be first of all in men's minds. Mr. Salmon has very wisely aimed at telling his story, so far as is possible in the limits of his space, as a connected whole, and at bringing into relief the dramatic development of the British dominions, East, West, and South, from the time of Henry VIII. to that of Edward VII. In a sketch such as this must necessarily be, it would be useless to attempt to give a detailed account of the rise of each portion of the Empire; all that can be done is to give a bird's-eye view of the whole, making one dramatic and uninterrupted story. In this Mr. Salmon has succeeded very well, and on reading through his little book it is surprising to find how much information he has compressed into so small a space. And this, we take it, is the highest praise that can be given to a work of this kind.

CASSELL'S PICTORIAL GUIDE TO THE CLYDE. (Cassell. 1s.)

THIS is a plain, useful guide of the ordinary guide-book kind, without any literary pretensions. It is thoroughly adequate from the practical tourist standpoint, and that is all which need be said. There are three official railway maps (of the Caledonian, Glasgow and South Western, and North British Railways), a plan of Glasgow, nineteen smaller maps or plans, and numerous illustrations from photographs of the principal scenes of interest. A handy matter-of-fact guide for the matter-of-fact Briton.

## Fiction.

TALES OF A FAR RIDING. By Oliver Onions. (Murray. 6s.)

MR. ONIONS has forsaken the comedy of his "Compleat Bachelor" and plunged head-first into unmitigated tragedy. Each of the five stories which this volume contains is packed with gloom; Mr. Onions seems deliberately to have set out to exploit the sinister and the horrible. He has exploited them with considerable success; the book holds one with something of the nervous terror of nightmare. Yet the tragedy is rather the tragedy of dreams and imagination than of life and tears. Mr. Onions is not content to take simple human material and treat it simply; only now and then do we get glimpses of the ordinary matters of an ordinary world. Every effect is heightened by touch on touch of excessive colour; it is as though a man should paint a picture consisting entirely of high-lights and impenetrable shadows. Even when he



is treating of the purely idyllic, Mr. Onions imports an element of impending disaster. This is particularly noticeable in the story called "The May-Stang," where we have a scene between a pair of lovers, passionate, indeed, and beautiful, but marred by a quality of what we can only call anticipatory calamity. Mr. Onions would in reality have heightened his effect by making the pair blind—as fierce passion is always blind—to what may come. But he must needs suggest in the very speech of his characters the tragedy which is to follow. That is a mistake in art, a mistake even from the point of view of simple story-telling. The fact seems to be that Mr. Onions has not learnt how to project himself into the characters which he has conceived. He appears to describe and illustrate them as adumbrations of himself: his whole treatment is too introspective. Heroism, pity, terror—these things are common to all humanity, but not as Mr. Onions presents them. And yet the book is one which cannot lightly be dismissed. Mr. Onions is almost a literary artist; occasionally we find ourselves satisfied with both matter and treatment. The description of the bringing in of the May in "The May-Stang" has poetry and fervour; it touches the imagination and produces a sense of real and actual romance. But the descriptive passages are very unequal; Mr. Onions has a delicate sense of words, yet it is only a half-developed sense. More than once we found ourselves re-reading a passage only to discover that it missed fire. Not infrequently Mr. Onions appears to say more than he actually says; he decks out common-places in tinsel.

But having said so much by way of criticism, we must conclude on a note of appreciation. These stories are by no means to be classed with ordinary stories. They are ambitious, and they are good enough to justify the author's ambition. Such a story, for instance, as "Greater Love than This" is rare in fiction. The subject is old, but the setting and emotional power are fresh and distinctive. In "Gambier," again, there is much that compels admiration, even though it be a somewhat reluctant admiration. The character of the priest is finely conceived, although the man does not convince us, and the description of the great cattle-killing and salting is astonishingly actual; it reeks of weary and dogged butchery. "Tales of a Far Riding" is a book which we shall not soon forget; it is something more than promising, it has actual achievement. But Mr. Onions must learn to deal with tragedy more objectively; his present method tends to unreality.

THE LIGHTNING CONDUCTOR. By C. N. and A. M. Williamson. (Methuen. 6s.)

MOTOR cars, mistaken identities, the Mediterranean littoral, love, petrol, and several other things make up the farrago of this book, which we might criticise as a novel, a book of travel, or an advertisement pamphlet. As a novel it is a story set out in letters, mostly from Molly Randolph to her father in New York, and from the Honourable Jack Winston to Lord Lane. Molly Randolph with her Aunt Mary determines to make a motor tour from Dieppe by way of Paris to the Pyrenees and round the Riviera into Italy. Jack Winston meets her accidentally in a difficulty with her car, and pretending to be Brown, a *chauffeur*, arranges to loan her his master's car, and to drive it. Molly falls into various ditches and difficulties by the way, from which the admirable Brown rescues her, and of course she is all the time falling in love with Brown. So far it is a Lady of Lyons story with a happy ending. But Mr. and Mrs. Williamson must have taken that trip. And as a guide book to certain little known corners of France the story will be helpful to enterprising travellers. For the authors are by no means reticent of their personal likings, and do not hesitate to tell you which is the particular brand of car they finally select. You will even

learn that Brown's master must be a nice and clever man because he admires Mr. Gissing, who happens to live at St. Jean de Luz. Moreover, whenever Molly Randolph washes her hands you are left in no doubt as to the kind of soap she uses. We are not competent to criticise the various makes of soaps and motor-cars; but as a story with an undercurrent of reality "The Lightning Conductor" runs gaily enough.

SILK AND STEEL. By H. A. Hinkson. (Chatto. 6s.)

THIS is a breathless story—the old phrase describes it better than any other. Mr. Hinkson has the knack of presenting rapid action; episode succeeds episode with the cumulative precipitancy of stones rolling down a hill-side. From first to last Mr. Daniel O'Neill, misnamed Sir Infallible Subtle, is embroiled in endless adventures. He is on the side of Charles I., rather by accident than from choice; but being a gentleman as well as an adventurer, he is faithful to the King. He carries messages, fights always, keeps a high heart and a ready tongue. He does nothing in the book to justify his nickname, his success being due to lucky accident and not to any particular activity of brain; but we accept him for what he is, and find him exhilarating company. The story is not a story of character; indeed, Mr. Hinkson appears to have made little attempt at characterisation. The King, the Marquis of Ormond, Lord Digby, are all too much alike, and there is far too much mechanical gesture in the book; we could have supplied for ourselves the innumerable bowings and hand-kissings which punctuate the narrative. The most convincing figure is that of Owen Roe O'Neill, and the best part of the book deals with his campaign in Ireland. Owen Roe O'Neill has dignity and a suggestion of restrained passion; he touches real romance. Of the women not much need be said; they supply the necessary love interest prettily enough, and leave no impression on the mind. But, as we have indicated, "Silk and Steel" is a story of action; it deals with deeds and not the depths of motive. And as a story of action it is full of reckless hurry and hot blood.

DREWITT'S DREAM. By W. L. Alden. (Chatto. 6s.)

"EVERYTHING is here," was the odd eulogy of a journalist recently on a book by one of our most popular funny men. Mr. Alden may have sought a blessing from the same critic when he put forth "Drewitt's Dream." It begins impressively. The characteristics of panic are well illustrated by a description of a Greek stampede during the Græco-Turkish war, when an Englishwoman is helped by the dreamer who, on her asking for his escort, rather usuriously responds "Yes, but it must be for ever." After the dream, which is a mixture of bullets and honey, the story declines into facetiousness. We have a millionaire who yachts for the look of the thing, though it makes him "everlastingly sea-sick," and because, "when it's a question between mind and liver," he votes "for the former every time." He is volubly anecdotal, and, thanks to him, American politics hold the same office in Mr. Alden's pages that the mother-in-law does in our comic press. His yacht scours the sea in search of the heroine, and a hospitable Papuan island receives its crew as wreckage. There a band of amazingly intelligent leopards is added to the dramatis personæ, and with their assistance the millionaire lives to see "the damndest, New Jerusalem, Hail Columbia day" he "ever struck." One need hardly add that "Drewitt's Dream" is sure to amuse a large number of people. It is, if we may venture on a careful metaphor, a pot of no particular shape filled with nonsense which is superficially concealed by a lid belonging to an urn.



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## The Tragedy of the Celt.

PEOPLE are usually willing to tolerate the Celt in the abstract. "A good-humoured fellow enough if the confounded agitators would let him alone, a bit impracticable, perhaps; but what does he want?" And you, who are not a confounded agitator at all, but only the kindly dummy of a Celtic brain, have on your lips a thousand and one answers to his abrupt demand. The old joke comes back to you, and you have it in your heart to reply "everything." "Politically," you begin easily, "he wants"—and then you pause, for that other joke at Westminster occurs to you and thousands of phantom voices seem to paralyze your own with the endless repetition of a rhetorical grievance. "Artistically," you continue less glibly, "he has ideals different from those of the Anglo-Saxon. He does not aim at comfort and respectability, and—and—being well thought of in the suburbs." But you cannot continue, for the Saxon's eye is looking past you with the fishy stare of an incorrigible well-being. Then because you are tongue-tied before him he will—only too inevitably—blister you with the central thought of his brain, the large thought which takes him beyond the suburbs in so far as it suggests a suburban girdle around the world. "The Empire," he will repeat solemnly, "the Empire, the greatest empire the world has ever known! Trade follows the flag, and English family life, sir, follows trade. That's what makes our empire real—trade and English family life. There's nothing like it anywhere else in the world and very soon it will be all over the world. One flag, one speech, one faith—" "One tariff," you interrupt, stung into rudeness by his articulate self-confidence, "one tariff and—er—a little English music." Then you turn away. You have caught the grotesqueness of his inept eulogy in favour of a cause requiring no defence, but you have been powerless to defend your own, powerless to make it clear to him that it is a cause separate and distinct from the hereditary joke at Westminster.

In truth, now as in the past, the Celt is impervious to the glamour of great movements whether for material or spiritual ends. In the dawn of that Christianity for which he had done so much, his artistic leaning was irresistibly towards Paganism. The twelfth century witnessed a movement of spiritual energy in which the Celtic races alone took part. On the other hand, neither the Pagan nor the Christian side of the Renaissance can be said to have appealed to them directly. They were alike uninfluenced by either Classicism or Romanticism. In the eighteenth century, the age of polite scepticism, the age which took its cue from the blighting irony of Voltaire—in this century of negative wisdom, the Celt renewed the psalm of his ancient faith. In the nineteenth century, preeminently the century of a calculated commercial prosperity, the century of compromise in the name of comfort, the wonderful golden age of the bourgeoisie, the Celt who was in need of so much remained stupefied—never so inarticulate as when he was most

verbose. And now when, so far at least as art is concerned, world-weariness is heavy upon our souls, now when we demand from poetry the opiate of verbal sweetness or the rough shock of a crude invective, from painting the delight in technical difficulty, from sculpture a psychological problem, from the drama eternal deliverance, even now the Celt comes forward again intoxicated with the echo of a forgotten rapture.

Always he appears in the hour of the lost cause and always his message is the same. The Celt hopes backwards: that is the secret at once of his vitality and of his despair. Inconsequent and incongruous as in the days of his chivalry—the least self-seeking in Europe—the Celt's desires are essentially outside and beyond the questions haggled over in Parliament or discussed on the boulevards of Paris. There is a reason for all this, and it is to be found in history.

Other races experienced a renaissance in the hour of their triumph, but regeneration came to the Celts in the hour of defeat. The material force which crushed them compelled them to fall back upon that immaterial power which has remained imperishably their own. It was in the nature of things that, while the advancing younger nations should look eagerly to the future, the Celts, who had lost everything, should revert for inspiration to the past. Their empire had crumbled away beneath their feet as in a dream, and it is precisely this sense of shadowy unreality and continual flux of destiny which they have expressed. Of these two things—his sense of loss and his sense of unreality—melancholy and aloofness, the predominant characteristics of his genius, are the outward expression. The preoccupation with an interior grief has produced that sincerity and absence of self-consciousness which give such an ingenuous charm to Celtic lyrics. His aloofness saves him from that robust insistence which so often reduces the personal note to the level of vulgarity. But in spite of these qualities of detachment he is, elemental himself, in essential sympathy with the simple and natural conditions of homely life. Miss Fiona Macleod, whose own work unites extreme delicacy of thought and hypersensitiveness to remote vibrations with the less Celtic gifts of clarity of expression and durability of structure, has quoted from Dora Sigerson's "The Kine of my Father" four lines exactly typical of the Celtic temperament:—

The kine of my father, they are straying from my keeping;  
The young goat's at mischief, but little can I do:  
For all through the night did I hear the Banshee keening;  
O youth of my loving, and is it well with you?

For here we have melancholy, brooding and self-centred, aloofness from the near and the actual, and at the same time primitive simplicity. The girl and the kine and the goat are so many figures in a landscape with which each is in perfect harmony. That is on the surface. Between the girl and the animals she tends, an unknown vibration passes, drawing her into a phantom world. For what can the words of the wise and sane avail with her who has listened alone in the night to the sinister message of the Banshee?

It is so real to the Celt, this presentiment, this sensation of suggestion from without which science has concluded to be derived from within.

But melancholy is apt to degenerate into morbidness, and it is to this quality that one traces so much of Celtic intensity. They stare into their dim past too fixedly, the mirage of that lost world is too vivid, the mirror is held too close to their own soul. "Le miroir, c'est le problème de la vie perpétuellement opposé à l'homme! Sait-on au juste ce que Narcisse a vu dans la fontaine et de quoi il est mort?"

Their aloofness, too, is apt to pass into vagueness, and is at all times antagonistic to the presentation of clear-cut figures, whether epic or dramatic. "This song," writes

Mr. W. B. Yeats in reference to some verses by Raftery, "though Gaelic poetry has fallen from its old greatness, has come out of the same dreams as the songs and legends, as vague, it may be, as the clouds of evening and of dawn, that became in Homer's mind the memory and the prophecy of all the sorrows that have beset and shall beset the journey of beauty in the world." And these words, which are themselves instinct with the haunting attributes of memory and prophecy, suggest the very key-note to what one might call the artistic tragedy of the Celt. For him these far-off legends have remained always "as the clouds of evening and of dawn." For him no Homer has caught in clear perspective the Proteus-like pictures of the past. And this Greek rendering of the beautiful, at once concrete and flexible, led naturally and surely to the supreme triumph—to the sculptural Antigone, whose appeal still stirs us with the pathos of a lost gesture, an incomparable nobility which nothing can vulgarise or obliterate. No such statues adorn the long dim galleries of the Celtic past. On the other hand, the personal intensity of their genius is alien from the more robust but infinitely less delicate intensity of what once stood for Romantic drama. Again, the pathological sociology of Ibsen, closely linked though it is with a certain phase of mysticism, is unlikely to influence the Celtic movement. It is idle to speculate upon the future of a drama evolved from legends, but one might suggest the possibility of such a drama developing in the direction of that symbolism of which M. Maeterlinck is the supreme master.

But the consummation of this artistic tragedy lies in that exquisite sympathy with the moods of nature which has been for centuries a Celtic habit of thought. That is the Celt's "magic"—to share the joys and sorrows of Nature herself to whom he feels himself closer than others, and who yet remains for him the more mysterious. The pathetic fallacy must have begun when men first watched the ominous black clouds float over a summer sky, or caught the fleet sunlight flashing momentarily on mountain pools. But with the Celt it has become innate, as though night and storm and foam must for ever express the tumults of some little human heart.

Well, the tragedy of his art resembles closely the tragedy of his history, from which, indeed, it had taken its origin. He whose empire had faded away into the dim past never brought his art definitely to bear upon the hard outlines of actuality. Race after race took up the strong chorus of the centuries, but the Celt's ears were strained only for the music of the infinitely far off. To-day even, a group of young Irish writers are expressing anew the strange charm of that legendary past. What is the secret of that charm? It is the charm of failure, of failure in a cause which one feels to possess the larger rightness, the failure of Antigone pleading uselessly to Creon. Over and over again it finds expression, and whether in the pages of W. B. Yeats or Moira O'Neill, of Dora Sigerson or Nora Hopper, it is accompanied by the same elemental qualities of the race. For these Celtic writers are still close to Nature, and, spiritual as they are, seem none the less to have caught in their mournful melodies the long-lost earth-whispers of their island. For these at least there is no bitterness in the failure of the Celt.

But if there has been something of doom in his failure, there is a more subtle punishment in his success. For it is part of the tragedy of this dwindling race that thousands and thousands of them should have fled for refuge to a people more prosperous, more material, more brutalised by the prestige of wealth than our own dominant bourgeoisie. It is part of the tragedy that they are bolstering syndicates whose primal instinct it was to defend ruins. It is part of the tragedy that they are blindly amassing fortunes whose rightful inheritance was dreams.

## The Sub-Celebrities.

THE immensity of life is brought home to the individual, not by the vastness of the things he sees with intention, but by the littleness of the things he sees by accident. I take up a morning paper and observe among the arrangements for the day a meeting of the Solicitors' Managing Clerks' Association. So, then, between half-past six and seven this evening there will be this ripple and convergence in the foot-traffic of London—not otherwise explicable. So, then, Solicitors' Managing Clerks are a folk—apparently not a feeble folk—with their own outlook on the world, their own social angle, and almost certainly their own imperious taste in neckties.

Why do I propound the obvious? My dear sir, is it the obvious? You may multiply such meetings by any figure you like, and then indeed the obvious will fatigue you. It is better to reflect that, at the moment when the Managing Clerks are parting their coat-tails in the Temple, the dames of the East Dulwich Habitation of the Primrose League are adjusting their pince-nez in the Far South East, pending the ascent on a palm-decked platform of a noble lord. And who be these large men, who troop into the smoke-room of the Criterion from some banquet-littered room, and dispose themselves, with ponderous delays, round the little tables, in the fast-ebbing faith that their funny man will presently relieve the tension of their super-civility? Who and whence are they? Can they be a little band of Flat Agents? Why, and why not? Guessing expires on a guess. Whoever they are, they are a fraction of London life, they are a set, they are a society, they are a proof of the immensity of life.

Another such proof lies before me. It is a large card on which is printed the official programme of certain festive proceedings in the neighbourhood of the Tottenham Court Road. This gathering has already taken place, is already a wrinkle in the receding seas of London's story. It was held at "The Feathers" under the auspices of the London Cabdrivers' Trade Union—Clerkenwell Branch. It was an entirely worthy and kindly gathering, being "for the Benefit of Old George Humphries, the Mush," whose recent troubles are sympathetically set forth in very small type and in lines eleven inches long.

I will not transcribe the names of the gentlemen who successively took the chair during that choric evening. They must have chased each other through it for hours, but multiple chairmanship is a kindly custom, and it is the custom of the L.C.D.T.U.

What is a Mush? On the authority of a responsible cabman, who added it to his fare, I am able to state that a Mush is the owner of three or four cabs; he is the yeoman of the mews, the crofter of the cab-rank. Old George Humphries occupies this honourable position, and his popularity is attested by the list of supporters whose names adorn the "Feathers" programme. Now these names are a rivulet of pleasing suggestion. They suggest not only the immensity of life, but the genial warmth of its remotest corners. I am not sure that they do not also reproduce some of the early stages in the evolution of surnames. Among Old Humphries' friends I find:—

Brummy at Young's.  
Chicken at King's.  
Coffee at Rice's.  
Porky at Page's.  
Old Shapes at Stibbard's.  
Meatey at Webb's.

Here is the surname of place in the making, and a suggestion of the vastness of the Mews world.

Another set of names may be distinguished as biographical. In this list each name seems to be founded on a previous career, or on certain proficiencies off the box:—

Bandy Q.C.  
Bedford Street Doctor  
Bill the Boatman.



Soldier George at Webb's.  
Lewis Bell Ringer.  
Captain Boyton.  
Tin Whistle Tommy.  
Laundry Jack.  
Old Sepoy.

A third set makes play with the most spacious and mysterious of adjectives:—

Old Joe Sowerby.  
Old Doscher.  
Old Tuppny.  
Old Port.  
Old Jim Hubbard.  
Old Jack Towers.  
Old Bob Waterloo.

A fourth set is virtuously distinctive. I give two examples:—

Silver King, not the Blackleg.  
Fred White, not the Other One.

Fifthly, we have names that seem to label their bearers by their ruling passions:—

Coachey first past the Post.  
Charlie Will Work.  
Peppermint Jack.  
Sweet Apple Joe.

Sixthly, we have a few names of a cryptic and literary kind. Three London cabmen are known to their fellows as:—

Damper.  
Cyclops.  
Shadows.

Lastly we come to real names, and these are a liberal education in nomenclature to any novelist. At least, I rarely find names in a novel so convincing as —

Tommy Poop.  
Jack Bashford.  
Wally Dillnutt.  
Tommy Scruse.  
Bill Peatling.  
Jimmy Quin.  
Teddy Bullbrook.  
Tich Lynch.  
Harry Blower.

Decidedly life is extensive. What do we know of the London cabman till we know his name? and what do we know of him when we know his name? The note-taking novelist, the descriptive writer, and the panting impressionist are ever on the run, yet how little they show us of the vast twilight depths and distances of London's life—the sub-celebrities—the humble and lowly men of heart!

W. W.

## Paris Letter.

(From our French Correspondent.)

MESSRS. CALMANN LÉVY have issued the eighth and last volume of the complete collection of Meilhac's and Halévy's plays. I am reminded, reading over their bubbling joyous nonsense, with such a fund of sense and sentiment at the bottom of it, of a conversation this autumn I assisted at in a French manor in Touraine. Our hostess had permitted her butler to go to Tours to show that classic town to a German maid of one of her guests. Tours is not a large town, and may be seen in a couple of hours, but these two had, owing to trains, four and a half at their disposal. Our hostess, whose attitude to her servants was delightfully familiar, asked the butler what they could do to fill up the long interval between two trains, and the man gravely replied: "Eh, bien, Madame, nous allons

cascader." The reply was received with a shout of laughter from all the guests, and turning to an austere member of the Institute who was my neighbour, and had laughed louder than anybody else, I asked him how the word "cascader" had come to enter the slang of the boulevards. He informed me that it made its appearance first in "La Belle Hélène" of Meilhac and Halévy's, when Hélène sings the famous—

Dis-moi, Vénus, quel plaisir trouves-tu  
A faire ainsi cascader la vertu?

And this led to a general discussion of the modern vaudeville and the vaudevilles of thirty years ago. The gaiety then was decidedly more innocent, more joyous, less cynical and more sentimental than the harsh, sensual false gaiety of to-day. Contrast Lavedan with Meilhac and Halévy. In Lavedan not a trace of high spirits, hardly a laugh, or if a laugh, something so coarse and cruel and bitter as to be infinitely sadder than tears. Meilhac and Halévy laugh at life in all its phases, seize clearly but smilingly its ridiculous side, its weaknesses, but also all that is lovable, tender, engagingly stupid in it. Never were writers less cruel, more persistently good-natured than this witty, mirthful pair. Their imagination is fantastic and amazingly young. Their love of the grotesque, of the simple humorous combination of dramatic blunders and episodes, is full of drollery, of inexhaustible invention. In their last volume "Tricoche et Cacolet" is a burst of inoffensive laughter. When people can enjoy such nonsense as that, there is no harm in them. And not a trace of vulgarity, which so often accompanies high spirits. The misfortunes of the amiable duke who loves not wisely if too well, and turns servant, pays, from mere force of habit, all the debts of a disorderly young houri he does not know, turns inn-keeper and waiter, loses his head when asked for drinks he never heard of, and resents the offer of payment, is a figure of exquisite absurdity; and the dialogue has that effervescent quality we associate with champagne and the old Palais Royal.

Brada has treated in "Comme les Autres" (Calmann Lévy) the same theme as the Brothers Margueritte in "deux Vies," divorce. The conclusion of Brada is in the main what the grave question of family interests forces us all to accept. Marriage is not always an ideal state, but once entered into, it should be for both sexes, for better, for worse. So much the better if for better; so much the worse if for worse. But divorce rarely mends matters; certainly never if there are children. And it is only by enforcing and strengthening the sense of responsibility that we can hope to ennoble humanity. The choice of a mate once made, its consequences should be bravely supported to the end, if marriage is to preserve its dignity. In this novel, as in all other modern French novels, fashionable society is depicted by Brada, herself an aristocrat well known in the world of fashion, as a thing to be avoided by self-respecting and intelligent persons, a vortex of silliness and selfishness, sport and sensuality; where all the interests of both sexes are mean, futile, undistinguished and unintelligent, and the conversation is of a quality apes and parrots would have no difficulty in emulating with suitable gifts of speech. The heroine, Madame de Ruvigny, is regarded by her husband and her friends as a savage, because she does not find it indispensable to her happiness to pass all her days in the quest of fleeting pleasure, but would, if she could, have a happy, quiet home with husband and children. This is not the husband's view, who tells her she is not in the tone of society, because she rejects lovers and objects to his having mistresses. A woman friend enters into the argument, and urges her to accept society as it is. She does so, after a sharp struggle, with the usual results in French novels. She takes a lover, an amiable-going man, who for once is not a cad. He is actually a gentleman, though titled, and loves her sincerely and passionately.



He entreats her to divorce, and strives to force his mother to accept her as a daughter-in-law. Meanwhile her husband is ruined, and forgetting her culpable love and intention to divorce, forgetting her conjugal deceptions and rancours, she offers him her fortune, which he refuses on account of their division. "Above you, above me, above our rancours there is the contract we freely subscribed to, and which gives me the right to force you to consider what is mine as yours. We have founded a family, which exists, and which we have not the power of destroying. Nothing, no hostile act of our wills can undo our marriage or prevent our children from being yours and mine. Before that absolute fact we must incline ourselves in hours of danger." Here is honest and sensible language we are not accustomed to in modern French novels, and it brings with it a refreshing sense of the reality of life. The husband yields to her arguments, takes the money, loses it, and ruins his wife. Again she rejects the passionate prayer of her lover, turns from the hope of happiness in divorce, and when her husband comes at night to ask her pardon and offers to give her freedom by his suicide, she cries "never," and leads him to the children's room. "I also have to ask your pardon," she says, "and you will find us here, I and my sons, waiting for you when you return." The book is not a stirring book, nor one revealing any distinction of style or subtlety of characterisation. In fact it has no particular quality, intellectual or literary. But its value lies in the fact that it ends with the human, sound and sane conviction that marriage is not a question of caprice or personal happiness, but a life-long responsible choice.

H. L.

## Impressions.

### XII.—The East.

THERE may be a dozen, there may be a score of them, roaming through England. Who can tell? To the western eye all these thin, quick-moving Orientals look alike. I have met them or him in London at all hours of the day and night, always with a little bundle of mats flung over his left shoulder. He wears a fez, that is his distinguishing note, shabby like the tight-fitting black coat. His pinched face, the colour of coffee-with-milk, has the furtive, hunted look of a sojourner in a strange land—alien and unsympathetic. I have never seen him sell a mat. Stop him, and he will throw them one by one over his right arm crying, "Nice mats. Nice mats for nice house. Nice mats."

Once I overtook him on a Surrey road. Far ahead I had seen his figure shambling along, and as I passed he offered me a magenta article worked with silver dragons, but the moment was not propitious. I went on my way, and did not think of him again till a late hour that night, when the door of the village inn bar-parlour opened, and flushed the East into a company of Surrey yokels. He stood in the doorway smiling, showing his white teeth, repeating his few words of English, pointing through the smoke to his mats and stroking them.

The yokels stared, and looked at one another open-mouthed; then slow smiles broke over their faces. A fuddled labourer in the corner brought down his pot of beer heavily upon the table and guffawed. That was the signal for a fire of slow-witted chaff against the shivering figure who stood smiling and cajoling in the doorway, not understanding a word, hoping that he had found a market for his wares, and repeating his few words of English, "Nice mats. Nice mats for nice house. Nice mats."

An old man, the Nestor of that village bar-parlour, who sat near me on the bench, frowned. The shrewd summing-up of the situation in his eyes moved me to comment on

that characteristic of the untravelled person to laugh at anything that is foreign to his experience. "Our insularity," I began, encouraged by his attention, "shows itself in—" But he cut me short, placed his clay pipe on the table, and, inclining his venerable head towards me, said in a confidential tone—

"I've seen them making them mats. They sit cross-legged on the floor as close as they can get to a pan of burning charcoal, and sometimes they light a pipe and take a few whiffs. They don't talk, and they don't seem to notice that you are looking at them, and they go on all day working at them mats."

He talked at great length, not very illuminatively, but I was interested in the man rather than in his experiences. For it was plain that he had wandered, had seen strange cities. When he paused to re-light his pipe, I asked, "You have travelled?" He shook his head. "It was at the Earl's Court Exhibition I see them making mats," he answered.

"Nice mats. Nice mats for nice house. Nice mats." A piece of cheese was thrown at the mat seller. He ducked, smiled, opened the door, and slipped out into the night. The East—enigmatic, indifferent, equal to any fate—departed as mysteriously as it had come, and the West returned to its beer. Then a silly thing was done. I quoted poetry to that Nestor of the village bar parlour:—

"Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,  
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat."

The old man looked at me earnestly, replaced his pipe on the table and said slowly: "They sit cross-legged on the floor. They don't talk, they—"

## Drama.

### Mr. Housman's Experiment.

QUITE apart from their positive literary value, such performances as those of "Everyman" and "Bethlehem" are of absorbing interest to all who look forward to a loosening of the narrow and hide-bound traditions which at present lie like manacles upon the limbs of modern drama. They widen the outlook by a reversion to ancient and valuable models that have been laid aside for the last three hundred years. "Bethlehem," of course, represents by far the older type of the two. Its history dates from about the tenth century; that of "Everyman" only from the fifteenth. The "Nativity" play grew up around the *praesepe* or "Christmas crib," the foundation of which a persistent tradition ascribes to St. Francis of Assisi at the hermitage of Greccio in 1223, although it is in reality a much more ancient ceremony. There was a *praesepe* at the church of Sta. Maria Maggiore at Rome about six centuries before the time of St. Francis. Originally the *praesepe* was merely a figured representation of the Virgin and Child, with St. Joseph and the ox and the ass, placed during the Christmas season behind the altar or in a side-chapel, for the admiration and reverence of the folk who came to worship. It was during the great period of liturgical elaboration in the tenth century that it became a centre for dramatic offices or interpolations in the ordinary church services. These were at first very simple. Thus at Rouen, on Christmas day, between Matins and Mass, boys were perched in a gallery to sing the "Gloria in Excelsis" and announce the Nativity to five priests clad in ordinary vestments, who stood for the shepherds. These then advanced to the *praesepe*, singing an anthem, held a short dialogue with two other priests, representing the midwives in attendance on the Virgin, and departed, singing

another anthem. Similarly the massacre of the children and weeping of Rachel were represented on Innocents' Day and on Epiphany; the Magi took the place of the shepherds and, led by a *stella* or hoop of candles pulled by a wire along the roof of the church, came in their turn to worship at the *praesepe*. Then set in a process of development and merging, during which the texts were enlarged and re-written, Herod, dramatically a very important personage, was introduced, and all the little episodes were brought together into a full Epiphany drama, which extended from the Annunciation to the Flight into Egypt. Even this, of course, was only the beginning of a still further process of amplification and merging. The Nativity drama coalesced, first with another drama, of the Prophets of Christ, which had also grown up at Christmas, and then with the corresponding Easter dramas of the Passion and Resurrection. Ultimately there appeared the full-grown "cosmic" mystery, covering the whole range of Old and New Testament history, and presenting a theme, of Creation and Fall, Redemption and Judgment, co-extensive with the limits of time and space. Meanwhile the change of temper had been hardly less than the change of scope. As a merely physical matter the plays had outgrown the church; and they came to be acted, no longer as part of the liturgy, but out-of-doors, at the great summer feasts of Whitsuntide and Corpus Christi, in the vernacular instead of in Latin, by guilds of laymen, instead of by priests. Still religious in subject-matter, they were a good deal secularized in treatment, and came to display all the mediæval layman's insensitiveness to style, his love of the spectacular, his complete failure to perceive any incongruity between the sacred legend and a liberal allowance of riotous humour. In one of the famous "Townley" plays of Wakefield there is a perfectly amazing farce inserted bodily into the action of the Shepherd's play. And this is thoroughly characteristic of the whole spirit of the later miracle-play.

I have given this little historic sketch in order to make it clear what sort of a tradition Mr. Laurence Housman had behind him in writing "Bethlehem." The play itself does not essay the large outlines of the cosmic mystery. It remains an episodic play, such as continued, especially in small places, to be acted, even after the cyclical plays of the great towns were firmly established. Its nearest affinities are to a late fifteenth century piece of this class preserved in one of the Digby manuscripts. But of course it is much more than a mere archaistic revival, such as that of "Everyman." Mr. Housman, if I understand him right, has attempted drama and not literary history, and has written for living twentieth century men and women, and not for scholars. And in fact the spirit of "Bethlehem" is very far removed from that of mediævalism with its rude humour, its frank delight in external pomp and show and its unhesitating acceptance of the marvellous as history. What we get is a mediæval theme looked at in an atmosphere of modern pre-Raphaelitism and Wagnerism and mysticism, and with all its values changed in the process. Instead of a naïve and picturesque appeal to our senses, Mr. Housman makes a subtle attack upon our nerves in which all the latest refinements of scenic art, and all the resources of symbolism and of silence, of clanging bells and of troublous music, have their full share. External incident, such as might be afforded by the fury of Herod and the writhing babes, he rejects, although the middle ages loved it. The waiting shepherds, quaintly but not farcically rustic; the solemn train of the seeking kings; the original and beautiful fancy of the knocking at the gate of Bethlehem; and then the long adoration; that is all the drama. It is charged with emotion, but with emotion that is mainly static, in one long crescendo of reverence and awe, rather than progressive. And in his desire to spiritualize and symbolize, Mr. Housman departs singularly from tradition. The key-note of the whole

piece is the epiphany of a divine and mystic love. It is written,

that ye may feel  
How in Love's hands time is a little thing!  
And so shall Love to-night your senses bring  
Back to the hills of Bethlehem.

So too, at the close, when the warning of Gabriel has bidden Joseph and Mary to take their flight into Egypt:—

Lost are the voices, sets the Star that shone:  
Back to the folds have gone the shepherd-band:  
Each king is now returned to his own land.  
Love is gone forth into the world to win  
Saints to their rest and sinners' back from sin,

It is, I suppose, then, in order to exalt the mystic and symbolical aspect of the event represented that its familiar and human features are left out, that the ox and the ass, the manger and the straw are forbidden, and that the literal mother and child are transformed into a blue wraith, bending low over a rosy radiance.

I do not propose to criticise Mr. Housman's play in any further detail. It is a very interesting experiment, but, as with all his work, the actual handling seems to me to fall a good deal short of the initial conception. It lacks the ultimate magic. But then I am not a mystic, and, to tell the truth, the fragment of the play that haunts me most is a wholly pagan and secular rhyme, put in as a foil and contrast to the central motive. It is the song of a young shepherd:—

The world is old to-night,  
The world is old;  
The stars around the fold  
Do show their light, do show their light.  
And so they did, and so,  
A thousand years ago,  
And so will do, dear love, when you lie cold.

Of the setting provided for the play by Mr. Gordon Craig, which is at least as interesting as the play itself, I shall hope to write next week. E. K. CHAMBERS.

## Art.

### Pictures in the City.

THE dilettante who, by chance or intention, has acquired the habit of regarding art as one of the serious pre-occupations of life, feels, when he goes into the City, a little like a strayed lamb. The pictures in the print shop windows startle him; the crowds bewilder him; the glimpses that he catches of dignified merchants standing at the doors of gigantic warehouses awe him. These spare or portly figures also interest him: out of the abundance of their riches they may be buying pictures. The mind of yonder elderly merchant may be far away from jute or cloth: he may be pondering whether or not he shall add a Constable or a Marcus Stone to his collection. The late Mr. Charles Gassiot, citizen and vintner, not only made a collection of pictures, but he also generously bequeathed it to the Corporation of London. Through the kindness of Mrs. Gassiot, 112 pictures from the Gassiot collection are now hanging in the Guildhall Art Gallery.

Nobody could possibly admire all these pictures, but most tastes will find something agreeable. If Clarkson Stanfield's idea of the sea does not please you, there are the blue waters of Sir Alma Tadema; if Landseer's portrait of Lord Alexander Russell, putting his pony at an obstacle, strikes you as comical, there are Sidney Cooper's kine; if Constable's palette-knife six-footer "Fording the River" seems altogether too overwhelming after the stress of an autumn in the City, there is Emile Lévy's "Paul et Virginie." Mr. Gassiot, like Sir Cuthbert



Quilter, was "richly endowed with the gift of catholicity of taste." He could appreciate and buy John Philip, Mr. Leader, Millais, and Augustus Egg. Dyce's picture of "George Herbert at Bemerton" was probably bought for the subject rather than for the quality of the paint. That poet and divine, clad in monastic garb, is seen walking by the banks of a stream, and as the first verse of his well-known hymn, "Sweet day, so calm, so cool, so bright," is inscribed on the frame of the picture, and as the poet is gazing at the sky, it is plain that the painter here set himself the perilous task of portraying a poet in the act of composition. Dyce's attempt leaves me calm. Mr. Gassiot also bought many examples of capable John Philip, who caught from his residence in Spain not only deep memories of that country's colour, but also something of the virility of her best sons. His "Chat Round the Braserio" has both dignity and power.

This collection is interesting, too, for the memories it awakes. In the late sixties and early seventies the middle-class horse-hair sofa homes of England depended for their wall decoration on the plates issued by the Art Union. Dentists and doctors were also willing purchasers of these prints. They gave their consulting rooms tone. My childish visits to the dentist will always be associated with "My First Sermon" by Millais, and "The Smile" and "The Frown" by T. Webster, R.A. After long years, here, at the Guildhall, I find the originals of those works, with pictures by William Collins that went out with crinolines.

But these old friends with new faces have more than a sentimental interest. They recall that easy-going time when the domestic picture was the dominant note of British art, when Millais, after his eager, active period of pre-Raphaelitism, realised that, with a little muffling of his conscience, he could become popular. He painted "My First Sermon" with all the old mastery, but with one eye on the family homes of England. It is easy to smile patronisingly at these domestic pictures with their old fashions, their aniline colours, their insistence on pathos or humour, and the determination of the painters to dot every i with the roundest blackest dot. Millais was not content to paint "My First Sermon," the little girl in the unaccommodating colours—scarlet cloak and stockings, and violet dress—he must also paint "My Second Sermon," the same little girl asleep in the same pew. Webster was not content to leave well alone with "The Smile," showing a row of school children seated on a form. You remember it, of course! Each child must be actively doing something conventionally typical of childhood to attract the attention of the public, or to raise the sympathetic maternal smile. The domestic painter of those days left nothing to the imagination. Webster must follow "The Smile" with "The Frown," the same form, the same children, the same elaboration of individual action, but each small child, as if at a word of command, has changed from a smile to a sob. Of them all William Collins, R.A., was the most British and domestic. But on occasion how good a painter he was. There is light and vitality of colour in his figures on "Barmouth Sands." But his Kitten picture! Alas! This work should be hung in the schools of the Royal Academy as a warning. It is the domestic picture pushed to the verge of triviality. On the sward in front of a country cottage, in the porch of which the inevitable mother sits nursing the inevitable child, is a group of older children. What do you think is the central incident on which Collins concentrated all his powers, for which he painted that cottage, that peep of landscape, that group of ill-drawn children? A kitten gazing angrily into a small mirror held by a boy, and the title of the picture is "The Kitten Deceived." But Collins was not often at that level. He could draw and paint well, as could most of those British artists who flourished in the middle of the nineteenth century. Academically they had

been well trained, and their conscientiousness was such that it almost became a vice. They could draw, too, in a stolid way, but their line had no magic in it, and suggests labour, rarely intuition. But what their pictures chiefly lack is light in all its delicate and transforming variations. That was to come later when Newlyn opened a window to the grey day.

This absence of light is very noticeable in the work of Clarkson Stanfield, of whose sea pieces there are several specimens at the Guildhall. His "Old Holland" and "The Great Tor" still have their admirers. You will see citizens lingering before his pictures with quiet appreciation on their faces, but to me they are dull—very dull. It is much easier to enjoy a past fashion in a costume picture, than a past fashion in a sea picture. Henry Moore and a score of younger men have spoilt me for Clarkson Stanfield's dowdy vision of the sea. It would be curious to hang his Venice picture, (the Thames below London Bridge has not less vitality) against Mr. Goodwin's great Venetian sky at the Old Water-Colour Society. Indeed, at this very exhibition there are pictures by Mr. Hook to show how the sea can be caught on to a canvas. If it were not for the figures that this able painter always groups in the foreground of his sea-scapes, they would give unqualified pleasure. What a shibboleth "human interest" is to landscape painters! Surely sea and sky, desolate cliff and yellow sand are enough. Fisher boys and girls almost always detract from the beauty of a sea-piece. Again and again one must raise the hand to blot out figures that have probably given the artist more thought and trouble than all the rest of the picture. I grant that it is exciting to observe in a picture one boy robbing an eagle's nest, while another prepares to beat off the avenging parent bird, but the episode is adventitious. It was a Shetland sea-scape that Mr. Hook wanted to paint, and his Shetland sea-scape that we want to see, not a picture of egg-stealing, even though the eggs be eagles'.

The collection has its surprises as also its interests and disappointments. One of its interests was the sight of M. Tissot in his early, worldly manner. "Too Early," a ball-room scene, has humour and character. A picture that gave me pleasure and a mild surprise was James Archer's "My Great Grandmother," a portrait of a girl, strong and finely painted. This small, resolute figure has life and charm.

C. L. H.

## Science.

### The Home of the Aryans.

IN the Prince Consort's days, when the true seat of culture was thought to be Germany, the late Prof. Max Müller blurted forth to a not over-grateful world the news that we and our revolted Sepoys were of the same human family. The Northern regions of India—some of his followers were even more particular, and reduced this expression to the Vale of Cashmere—were the cradle, if not of the whole human race, yet of its predominant group; and while some of the members of that group stayed at home and remained black, others went forth to seek their fortunes in distant Europe and became white. Hence the Vedas which the learned professor did so much to make known to the Western world were the common inheritance of ourselves and the blameless Baboo; and the theory that intellectual like physical light comes from the East was shown to have a rational as well as a mystical foundation. Later, scientism of another kind came to help the paternal enthusiasm which Max Müller felt for the subject of his own life-work; and people who had, in Mr. Kipling's words, "annexed as many of the Vedas as had been translated into French or English, and talked of all the rest," joined with those who really knew something about



them in declaring that all Western wisdom originally came from India. For was not India the primitive seat of the Aryans, where Greeks and Bengalis, Teutons and Rajputs, Russians and Jats—or at any rate the original founders of these distinguished varieties of the human race—must have once dwelt together in brotherly unity?

Now this mare's nest, though by no means the only one that "daring Germany" has sent us to seek, had as its foundation the idea always dear to the German that linguistics are the key to all human knowledge. Sanskrit, the language in which the existing MSS. of the Vedas are written, can be shown to be the parent tongue of the Romance, the Celtic, the Teutonic, and of some of the Slavonic languages, besides showing affinities with the ancient Persian or Zendic, and many of the modern dialects of Hindostan as well. Hence, it was argued that the speakers of these different tongues must at one time have all been of the same race. But this does not follow in the very least, for language is about the worst test of nationality that can well be devised. The Jews, for example, while preserving their racial characteristics unaltered, have, since the days of Nebuchadnezzar, spoken in different parts of the world almost every known tongue but Hebrew; and the instances of the Italian-speaking Lombards, the French-speaking Bretons, and the English-speaking Highlanders and Irish are too obvious to be dwelt upon. If we go further afield, we find, on the Western Continent, both African negroes and aboriginal Red-skins speaking no other language but English, and Aztecs and Peruvians using Spanish as their mother-tongue. Language, indeed, is seen to be some indication of neighbourhood and political supremacy, but hardly ever of origin.

Nor can it even be said that the evidence of linguistics, such as it is, will bear the weight that the asserters of the Asiatic origin of the Aryans were inclined to lay upon it. Prof. Sayce, Max Müller's successor in his Oxford chair of Comparative Philology, was not long in showing that the close relationship alleged between Sanskrit and Zend depended chiefly upon the fact that our relics of both these ancient languages were written at a date much earlier than any other Aryan writings in existence. He and others showed, too, that some of the languages still spoken in Eastern Europe, Lithuanian, for instance, were much nearer to the original form of Sanskrit than any modern Indian dialect. Hence a strong party sprang up which would transfer the primitive seat of the Aryans from Asia to Europe, and would make the southern parts of Russia the centre from which the Aryans are supposed to have gone forth to the conquest of the whole world. Nor does this explanation fit one whit less well with all known facts than the other. From Southern Russia it would have been perfectly possible for successive hordes of "Aryan" immigrants to have poured southward to the Mediterranean as the barbarians did on the break-up of the Roman Empire; while if others had skirted round the Northern shores of the Caspian, and thus have fallen upon Western Asia, it would have only been what actually happened when the terrible Scythian or Cimmerian invasion took the same route in the closing days of the Assyrian Empire, and thus opened the door for the successful advance of Cyrus. As for the chance of a power once seated on the Euphrates imposing its own language and culture even as far south as India, Alexander proved that to be possible enough by his conquest of Chitral and the Punjab. This seems to be the view most in favour with ethnologists at present, as is shown by the work of Prof. Hirt, who thinks that he can fix the primitive home of the Aryans in a spot now inhabited by Letts and Lithuanians to the north of the Carpathians.

But what shall we say as to the civilization which accompanied these fertile streams, not necessarily of Aryan peoples, but of Aryan languages? I am afraid that later scholars hardly support the high ideas once formed of it. A love of personal freedom may, indeed,

have followed the Aryan wherever he appeared, but it was generally accompanied by an equally strong love of a form of rule in which he should be the master, and the first occupant of the soil the slave. In Sparta, we find the Dorians, who were certainly an Aryan-speaking race, enslaving the Helot; in Persia, the Aryan Mede riding roughshod over the Mongoloid aborigines, whom he contemptuously called Turanians. In Russia and Scandinavia we see another Mongoloid people, of whom the modern Lapp is the only remnant, fleeing before the Aryan until reduced to live on the very outskirts of the lands that were once theirs. Yet the Aryan-speaking conquerors seem to have had no special addiction to any particular form of government, or even of religion, but to have adopted with great readiness those evolved by the different peoples among whom he was cast. The same might be said also of his artistic instincts, for there is no special form of art which can be called Aryan, and that shown by Aryan-speaking peoples in later times, such as the Greeks, is almost certainly due to another source. On the other hand, the words which are the same in all Aryan languages show that all the Aryans were acquainted before their dispersion with the art of agriculture, and had made much progress with the domestication of cattle. And everywhere we find them rising superior to all considerations of latitude or climate. Neither cold nor heat, river nor sea, mountain chain nor desert plateau seems ever to have been able to turn back the Aryan in his march towards the land on which he had set his heart.

Perhaps it has been this last peculiarity, rather than the tendency to philosophy and metaphysics with which he was once credited, that has most led to the Aryan's success in the world. It has been noted by students of evolution that the forms best fitted to survive are those that most quickly adapt themselves to an altered environment. Animals like the bear and the weasel, which can change their very skins to adapt themselves to an altered climate, increase and multiply and replenish the earth while more unadaptable beasts like lions and elephants are quickly dying out. Even the stripes of the domestic cat, now pretty generally spread over the civilised earth, are said to be a reminiscence of the time when, coiled up in the sands of her original country on the banks of the Nile, she found it convenient to assume the appearance of a sleeping python. It may therefore well be that it was in consequence of his power of varying himself that the Aryan has always showed himself superior to the Semite, and this is in itself quite sufficient to account for his rapid spread over the face of the earth. What first caused him to leave his original home we may see another time.

F. LEGGE.

## Correspondence.

### Mr. Waddington's "Collected Poems."

SIR,—Would you permit me to point out that there are two misprints in my sonnet "From Night to Night" quoted in this week's ACADEMY. The word "remote" in the sixth line should be "remain," and the word "truth" in the thirteenth line should be "truths."

With reference to the reviewer's observation that "Mr. Noel reels off important poems of alarming length without turning a hair," I regret to state that Mr. Roden Noel died some years ago.—Yours, &c.,

SAMUEL WADDINGTON.

[We regret the misprints to which Mr. Waddington calls our attention. With reference to Mr. Roden Noel, our reviewer simply used the present tense as it is constantly used in writing of deceased writers.—ED.]

## A Suggestion.

SIR,—In these days of multitudinous and varied editions of Shakespeare's works, I have sometimes—being a great lover of the fat knight—wondered why some publisher does not bring out an edition of the Falstaff plays. Perhaps you will permit me to suggest that a good edition of these plays would be acceptable to many persons, and would probably not be an unprofitable venture. It might be in moderate-sized quarto form, with good paper and fair margins. It would be desirable that it should have an introductory essay on the character, &c., of Sir John, from the pen of a competent Shakespearean scholar. And if the services of a really good artist could be obtained, it would, I think, be all the better and more sought after for having a number of adequate illustrations.

I trust this suggestion may meet with favour from some enterprising publisher.—Yours, &c.,

J. W. CARRINGTON.

OTHER LETTERS SUMMARIZED: "Ogier Rysden," in reference to our correspondence on "the letter h," quotes the 84th of the *Carmina of Catullus* as being very much to the point.—Mr. Algernon Ashton this week is perturbed over the light in the Clock Tower at Westminster.

## Our Weekly Competition.

## Result of No. 170 (New Series).

Last week we offered a Prize of One Guinea for the best account of "The First Christmas Day I remember." Twenty-three replies have been received. We award the prize to Miss Violet Burton, 8, Wemyss Road, Blackheath, for the following:—

Out of the mists of long ago, memory recalls a brilliant reality, which, at the time, seemed like a dream.

It was in Italy: in expectant silence we waited outside the forbidden door.

At the magic words, "Come in, children!" it opened. Then burst upon us this new and golden glory of a Christmas tree: a slender, swaying cypress, tapering to the ceiling; glorious with light and colour.

White candles (associated with offerings to the saints), fixed in clay pipes, shed a brilliant light—golden, fairy-like. Dazzled, we stood in silent wonder.

"Holy Mother and the Angels! what a sight!" said Luigi, the friendly waiter, "and has not the Signore used the blessed Kings and Angels?" Yes; they were all there.

Above the donkey riding up the foliage hung an angel, with legs and arms astonishingly pink, while shepherds with their flock rested beneath the foliage. Mysterious parcels—some tall, cornucopia-shaped, hung like fruit from every bough.

Serene and silent, a beautiful lady sat on the lower branches. We looked at each other, anxiously. The one grand moment to me that Christmas night was when I embraced that beautiful doll—my consolation for many after years.

Other replies follow:—

It was my eighth birthday. I know so well, because when I came to be nine I had no mother.

Christmas day and my birthday being one, Santa Claus was lavish with his gifts, and that morning found us early awake and about, for I, at least, had a feeling that the presents of the night could not be really solid actual possessions until I was up and clothed. My nightgown was notoriously a garment for dreams.

Apart from the multitude of sweet, sticky, and very transient delights of the day was the everlasting gift of Hans Andersen's "Fairy Tales."

The daylight passed in occasional races to meet the postman, and in snow-man making on the meadow, which surrounded our house. At evening, in the firelight, I sat at my mother's footstool and heard,

for the first time, the glorious adventures of Gerda in the "Snow Queen," and of John who married the beautiful princess, in "The Travelling Companion" and became king of the whole country.

Then the firelight must have come into my eyes, for I leaned my head against my mother's knee, and remember no more.

[D. M., Glasgow.]

My first memories of Life, curiously enough, stretch onward from my fifth Christmas Day. It was spent in India—I awoke looking for my stocking—it was brimful of good things—I forget what they were. My first worry was Santa Claus—who was he? Why did he only come once a year? Breakfast brought with it more delightful presents. Afterwards the verandah was haunted by natives with their offerings. Trays of sweetmeats drove my debut at church from me. My mother remembered it and took me off. Perhaps the novelty had worn off by then, certainly it was the Commandments which perturbed me. Why did the padre repeat what my elder brothers and sisters knew well? And why did the choir invariably respond "Incline our ears to eat this straw." All the grown-ups seem to understand: for years I dared not ask an explanation. After church came my first disappointment. The trays of sweetmeats had disappeared. My ayah told me they had been sent to the barracks for the soldiers' children—Santa Claus had forgotten them—the sweetmeats were not good for Missy Baba. What cared I? I had lost them, all consolation was useless. Life had commenced.

[Miss C., Bagshot.]

Fifty years ago Christmas was not in Scotland, so I remember nothing before '55, when I crossed the border. Papists and Prelatists did something queer that day; but we cared not to understand the wherefore. Mysterious jollity of England! holy day yet more mysterious! A new land, new customs for the unspeakable little Scot. Not only had we to plunge our hands into living fire in quest of raisins (plums they called them), but we actually went to church on a week day! Here was a revolution in the natural order. The immense church (they called it a cathedral, but I knew it was a church) was more than half full; presently thirty angels entered, and actually took their seats in front of us. I was very near one very tiny angel; at first I mistook him for a little boy in a night-gown, but when he began to sing, when they all began to sing, I felt "this is indeed the gate of heaven!" I was rudely undeceived; irritated doubtless by my persistent adoration, he deliberately grinned at me, putting both hands in succession to his nose!

[T. C., Buxted.]

They said it would be Christmas when we got to London, but it never was. There must have been eons of time when we awoke morning after morning to find the window-square flooded with the red and purple of the winter sunrise, or yellow with fog, and no Christmas. One could tell that of course even without looking at the limp and empty stockings on the bedrail: there would be a magic in the air of Christmas quite unmistakable. One remembered another festival called Good Friday, when there were hot cross buns under the pillows. That had been fabled to be recurring; but, long looked for, it had at last been given up as lost in the mist of the ages. We feared that a similar fate had befallen Christmas. How it came at last I do not remember, but it seems to have been quite a pagan festival. Many holly-decked dishes, many little cousins piling their hats on our beds, much shouting—but no carols or church bells come to my memory. A part of Christmas was to stand carrying a basket and wearing a scarlet cloak, to represent Red Riding Hood. People said that it was very good and clever to stand so still, and one reflected complacently on the ease with which goodness and cleverness are practised.

[J. K., Staunmore.]

## Competition No. 171 (New Series).

This week we offer a prize of One Guinea for the best verses (not to exceed sixteen lines) on the New Year.

## RULES.

Answers, addressed, "Literary Competition, THE ACADEMY, 43, Chancery Lane, W.C.," must reach us not later than the first post of Wednesday, 31 December, 1902. Each answer must be accompanied by the coupon to be found on the second page of Wrapper, or it cannot enter into competition. Competitors sending more than one attempt at solution must accompany each attempt with a separate coupon; otherwise the first only will be considered. Contributions to be written on one side of the paper only.









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